











# MUSLIM CHIVALRY

BY  
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AUTHOR OF  
LAYS OF LOVE AND WAR & ETC.

RANGOON :  
BRITISH BURMA PRESS.

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1900.



**TO**  
**ABDUL KAREEM JAMAL**  
**THIS VOLUME**  
**ON**  
**MUSLIM CHIVALRY**  
**IS**  
**RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED**  
**AS AN**  
**APPRECIATION OF HIS EFFORTS**  
**ON BEHALF OF**  
**MUSLIM EDUCATION.**





## PREFACE.

WITH the exception of the article on Salahed-din, which is new ; the other prose articles are based on a series of five written for the *Crescent* and published in 1892 also, on two articles written for the *Ardrossan and Salcoats Herald*. They have all been re-written. The poems have been collected from the following magazines; The Journal of Moslem Institute, Calcutta; the Islamiya College Magazine, the Crescent and the Islamic World, where they appeared at various intervals.

YEHYA-EN-NASR PARKINSON.



## INTRODUCTION.

THE supreme literary gift of J. Yehya-en-Nasr Parkinson has gained as remarkable a distinction and popularity in the field of philosophical speculation as in the flower gardens of poetry. What I have endeavoured to put forth in this short introduction is a brief survey of his life and works, in the hope that it may be useful to the lovers of Islamic as well as scientific researches.

J. Yehya-en-Nasr Parkinson was born of Irish parentage in the small town of Kilwinning, Ayrshire (Scotland) on the 17th February 1874. The family of his origin was a distinguished one in the ancient history of Britain and according to tradition is a branch of the Durham family cadets of the North of England clan of the Fetherstonhaughs. His mother died while he was a child of seven months, and he passed under the guardianship of his grandfather and grandmother: two earnest Christians, with no scientific or literary pretensions of any kind, but faithful to the religious creed they had been born in. Their sole repository of knowledge being the Bible. But recognising their own deficiency they gave their grandson the best education that a Scottish Board school could give. This was all that lay in their power to do for little John. With such indulgent and loving guardians, it will be at once surmised, that he gave little attention to scholastic formulas, but from boyhood, he developed an omnivorous appetite for reading.

In early years, his studies were confined principally to romantic literature. Though his early career, like those of many great men, did not indicate the great distinction he was destined to achieve yet his love for the sublime and the good which is the distinguishing characteristic of his philosophy and poetry, was conspicuous from the very beginning at school, the only subject, he took delight in, was the geography of Scotland at which he became such an adept that he could beat even his teacher. His *Pon Assinorum* was not Euclid but Grammar. He could never get over the verb. For this reason in his oriental studies, he had to rely more on a comparative analysis of the work of others rather than any critical investigation of his

own. But this, too, was of some advantage to him as it gave him less room for any personal bias towards any point at issue.

At the early age of sixteen, his grandparents, under the shade of whose genial and fond care he had grown up, died and he was left quite alone to make his own way in this world of struggles and difficulties. Already he had managed to pass out of the 6th standard, in the year 1887 but had been obliged to leave school and enter service to help his beloved grandparents in their old age.

Though his income at that time was very small, he managed by careful economy to save something by which he bought books on Astronomy, a subject in which he took profound interest. At this time of trouble, a few kind relatives offered him some sort of assistance but, he being a person of independent spirit, did not like to be under the obligation of any one to be pitied by people, so he refused their offer with thanks.

His love for the sublime led him to give particular attention to Astronomy, a subject which deals with the vast and endless expanse of space and the wonders of the heavens. He found so much interest in this subject that he took up the study of Mathematics again which he had discontinued. His labours in the field of Astronomy were not in vain, and were soon appreciated and recognised by his election as a member of the West of Scotland Branch of British Astronomical Association. His hankering after truth and fresh knowledge increased with the growth of his age and culture. He took up Biology and became very soon master of it; one subject leading him on to another and opening up new fields of investigation and wider realms of thought. Want of necessary books were a sad barrier to attainment of knowledge; but by dint of perseverance he was able to collect more than four hundreds works by great writers on various scientific and philosophical subjects:—such as Huxley, Haeckel, Darwin, Clodd, Brown, Grant Allen, Smith, Hallam, Bryce and others. About the year 1900, he for the first time began contributing articles on Astronomy and various other subjects to the press.

At this time his attention was directed towards the study of the different systems of philosophy and the various religions of the world. In the first instance, he joined the United Presbyterian Church, but left it soon being dissatisfied both with its profession and practice. Afterwards he got deeply engaged in the study of Islam and its History.

After sometime he came to learn of the presence of an enlightened Moslem Community at Liverpool and commenced communication with Shaikh Abdullah Quilliam Bey, the Shaikh-al Islam of the British Isles—.

The lofty teaching of Mahomed and the sublime philosophy and purity of Islam produced such convincing and strong impression upon his mind that he embraced the Islamic faith and soon after dedicated the services of his pen to the cause of Islam. He contributed numerous philosophical and religious articles to various periodicals. He took to poetry rather late, in the year 1900 at the suggestion of one of his friends. Of his poems, we may mention among others ; " A dream of life," "The Sons of Islam," "The Lady and the Troubadour", "Lays of love and War ", "A rose garden of meditation " and many others.

His poetry, too, breathes a high and sublime philosophy and indicates how pure, refined, and cultured must be the person from whose soul emanate so grand and beautiful ideas. The language, imagery, the sentiment and thought are all instinct with music, floating, flowing and rippling along in an element of liquid harmony and brilliance, Mr. Parkinson believes there is but one reality, everything in this universe is inter-related. Allah is not transcendent but immanent, the power in nature that makes for righteousness, the divinity that shapes our lives, the ethical law that is manifested on the evolution of life.

" Yon glowing sun,  
Mankind, the earth, the stars are one ;  
In nature neither " I " nor " thou " ;  
No past, no future, only now.  
From man to microbe, moon to star.  
Phenomena correlated are,  
One whole without a single gap  
Series and series inter-lap."

Truth to him is relative, it is an attribute of reasoning beings only ; it is true cognition, a correct description of facts and of their relations.

“ Learn ye the secret most have missed ;  
Outside of mind no Truths exist,  
Perception just cognition brings,  
From which the human conscience springs.”

The difference, which we see all around us is nothing but difference in form—

Man is man only because of his form. These forms are always changing and are short living. One form changes into another and so for ever.

“ From like to like, from life to life,  
Never from transmigrations free.”

The poet asks to himself “What kindles passions’ strongest fires.” Which is the only cause of diversity of ideas in this homogenous world and what is the means of putting an end to all these diversities of thought. The poet himself answers :—

“ It is self, the root of all desire  
To taste delight of paradise.  
To free the soul, over selfhood rise.”

It is only when we can soar triumphant over self and merge into the universal Cosmic all, that the real goal can be attained and perfect peace will for ever reign.

Mr. Parkinson resigned his employment under the Busby Spinning Co. on 1st April 1908 and began to live with his Aunts at Belfast. But he was soon invited to Rangoon by Mr. Abdul Kareem Jamal—the well-known merchant. Mr. Parkinson has not been passing his time uselessly in Rangoon. He has contributed many splendid articles on various interesting subjects of current topics to the local press.

RANGOON: }  
14th June 1909. }

ALI C. ARIFF.

## A REVERIE.

NOTHING quickens the youthful pulse and causes the youthful heart to throb with all the intensity of new-born life, nor brings out the emotions of the young and passionate soul, like tales of ancient chivalry, of adventure and derring-do. How the young heart longs to ride forth into the world armed *cap-a-pie*, as a knight errant in search of fortune, fame and lady-love. Ride forth laced from head to heel in shining mail, and bearing on his arm a polished shield blazoned with the arms and achievements of his race; and charged with the legion "For Honour;" mounted on a noble steed, his lance swung at his saddle-bow; his great sword at his side, his visor upraised and a snow-white plume of ostrich feathers streaming o'er his helmet in the wind. Ride forth from his ancestral home in manhood's fresh enthusiasm, his face all aglow with joy, ready to face all foes and brave all dangers.

On he goes through the woody avenue, surrounded by a pillared wall of forest giants, the branches of which meet overhead, his eyes eager with hope and his mother's kiss still sweet upon his lips. Through the interlacing foliage a ray of sunshine breaks in a golden glory as it glitters on his casque and is reflected from his shield. At last, through the vista of gnarled stems and twining branches his eye catches a gleam of distant towers, the ivy-crowned turrets of a mighty mansion, the battlements of a grand baronial pile.

Unconsciously he pricks his charger faster forward while a hectic flush has mantled on his brow. His fingers now close nervously on the handle of his ashen-spear and anon seek the hilt of his keen Toledon steel. As he peers eagerly through the vista of forest his eye rests on a gothic window high up on the donjon keep and almost



hidden by the ivy-runners. His imagination conjures up, outlined in its dark recess, a human form, followed by a glimpse of a lady's glove and the flutter of her silken scarf.

It is but a little glove,  
 Emblem of a woman's love,  
     A little glove ;  
 Token of her great esteem,  
 Tribute of love's happy dream,  
     A little glove ;

Worn on my helmet bar  
 It shall be my guiding star,  
     That little glove.  
 If I wander far from thee  
 It shall ever with me be ;  
     Thy little glove.

In memory of my dearest love,  
 I shall wear that little glove ;  
     My fairest love,  
 Star of hope that beckons me ;  
 Star to lead me unto thee,  
     A little glove.

Instinctively his lance swings into rest, the rowels plow his horse's flanks, at war-horse speed he dashes onward, uttering his battle-cry, on towards the postern gate. When, lo ! Alas ! just as he presses close to the iron portcullis the fabric vanishes, and he awakes to find he has been building castles in the air.

Does the youthful heart stop here ? No, never ! The fleeting vision but lends enchantment to the dream, and he longs to live it over again. So the dreamer goes on dreaming, "dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before." He reads on, story after story and ballad after ballad. Hero after hero and heroine after heroine is passed in grand review ; and he loves them all, no matter of what race, religion or nation ; so scene after scene is enacted, and picture after picture is engraved upon his

brain, in all the brightest colouring of the mind's wild imagery. His own personality is lost in the personalities of the different actors, and in all the fire of ecstatic vision he re-enacts their deeds and achieves their glories once again.

Now Wodin holds high revel, the storm-god rides to-night on the howling wind as it shrieks through the valleys and the ravines and churns the rivers into foam ; aye, rides as he never rode before. A shriek more piercing than the wind rings out, and a human form is seen tossing on the bosom of the waters : but, even as the naiads stretch forth their hands to pull her to their caves beneath the current ; a figure leaps from the bank into the surging stream, and after a desperate struggle, during which the nerves of the spectators are palsied and their blood at fever-heat, she is borne in safety to the bank by the arm of the powerful swimmer. She recovers consciousness to find her head resting on her saviour's bosom ; her soul looks through her eyes into his ; and, after a series of adventures, they are united at last and live happy ever afterwards.

"The scene was changed." It is a town (of bygone days), the inhabitants of which appear to have been raised to the highest pitch of excitement. The crowd in the market place has assumed gigantic proportions. The rich merchant prince of the city is haranguing the populace. His daughter (the most beautiful girl in the town) has been carried away by outlaws to their retreat in the mountains, which lie far away to the north. Will any person be found daring enough to attempt her rescue ? Yes ! A few days previous a stranger had arrived, a young soldier of fortune (the usual), fair-haired, with eyes of heaven's own blue, of handsome form and noble bearing. His dress would proclaim him of the middle class, but the tone of his speech, and the majesty of his look lead to the conviction that he is of noble if not royal birth, but that birth is at present shrouded in mystery (stolen when a child from his ducal home, his parentage is known only to the hermit who brought him up). The hero at once sets out alone to dare the unknown perils of the mountains in an attempt to rescue his lady-love and add renown to his yet uncharged escutcheon.

The way is long and dangerous, full of invisible traps and pitfalls. But true love knows no obstacles, brooks no rivals, fears no foe and will attempt to surmount all dangers. His path now lies through the tangled forest, the haunt of wiry wolf and sluggish bear ; where phantom forms seem to grin and mock him as they flit among the trees ; now over a dismal swamp, where the phosphoric glow of the will-o'-the-wisp lures the unwary traveller to the treacherous morass. Now he climbs the mountain side, to where a torrent dashes like a silver streak down the barren rock, while high above the mountain towers a mighty glacier, stretching its many arms over the summit, draping it as with a bridal veil. Now he climbs a jagged boulder ; now a slippery path ; while beneath him, yawns the mouth of a mighty abyss, the interior black as Erebus.

A thousand feet below rushes the mountain torrent. The sound of its flowing waters is borne upwards from the inky depths, now like the hissing of a serpent, now like the roaring of a dragon. Time and again the hero slips and is almost precipitated into its awful mouth, but supernatural hands seem to aid him, and each time he recovers and continues his ascent. At last he gains the mouth of the cavern wherein the outlaws have their abode. For an instant he pauses at the entrance. Will his heart fail him ? No ! A woman's cry reverberates through the cave, echoing and re-echoing as it rolls from rock to rock. He dashes forward into the darkness, heedless of danger, drawing as he bounds his trusty blade, a blade more famous than had ever been King Arthur's sword Excalibur, or Roland's sword Durando. He is just in time to strike down a gigantic robber and to seize the fainting girl as she slips from his grasp. He starts back to find he is hemmed in, the solid wall of rock behind him, a semi-circle of steel in front. Then his trenchant sword clove fiery circles round his head, and wrought havoc amongst his foemen ; Here the sabre flashed and there a robber fell to rise no more until the warning trumpet should awake the dead. Never knight did braver deed, nor doughtier arm spread death around with crimsoned steel since the days of peerless Launcelot. But no single arm, when so far outnumbered, can victorious issue from the fight, A hundred

brands are flashing at his breast ; a thrust speeds beneath his guard and pierces the maiden's swelling bosom ; while from beneath his mail the red tide of life flows down the hero's limbs in torrents. The maiden's weight grows heavier on his arm ; weaker fall his blows ; he sinks upon his knee, a score of blades are buried in his heart, and his life goes out, out into the glory and the future. The cave is filled with a weird and ghastly light, gaunt forms stand around, holding on high the blushing brands. On the floor love lies, blood issuing from a hideous wound between her breasts, with his head pillowed on her bosom the hero lies, waiting for the awakening.

A bark skims slowly through the estuary of the River of Life. At last its frail keel is plowing the Waters of the murky Lake of Death into which the Rivers of Life keep flowing. Onward floats the bark—a fleck of snow in the Tartarean darkness. On its deck lies the figure of Chivalry, clad in the vesture of the dead, his pale brow crowned with the laurel wreath of Honour. Beside him lies his broken sword, his nerveless hand still grasps the bladeless hilt. On he drifts like a Norse King in his War-ship, drifting to Valhalla, onward to where the cliffs of the Future rise from the Waves of Time. The breeze grows fainter as the bark nears the shore ; now there is scarcely a breath to move the fluttering sails. On the land spectral forms are seen waiting to receive the Last of the Chevaliers.

There, in all his gorgeous panoply is Don Alvar Fanez, there noble Roland and gallant Olivier ; there Bayard and Du Guesclin bearing the Fleur-di-lis ; there Chandos and Manny with the Lions of the North ; there, grim-visaged, majestic Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar Mio Cid el Campeador ; there Salah-ed-deen the flower of Saracenic chivalry and his great opponent Cœur-de-Lion ; there even as in life, towers great Almansur, terrible as when at the head of the Knights of the Mussalmans he swept like an avalanche from the banks of the Gaudalquiver to the mountains of Asturias ; when Leon, Zamora and Astorgas lay in ruins behind him and he carried in triumph the bells of St. Iago to the capital of Cordova to adorn its splendid Mosque.

The breeze fails, makes one spasmodic effort to regain vitality, then dies out. Down come the sails, the keel grates upon the shingle, the bark has stranded on the shore of the Promised Land. Incarnadined is the steel blue of the sky, dimmed the weeping stars, and splashed with blood the disk of the waning moon. Chivalry is dead. The dream of the dreamer is ended, the dreamer has finished the dream.

The smiling morn in highest heaven did ride  
 'Mid circling fields of star-dust spreading wide ;  
 My love and I beneath an olden tower  
 In dreams of love outpaced the racing hour.

While Luna o'er us cast a silver veil,  
 Begem'd with starry emblems, golden pale ;  
 Sweet Love enthralled the ivy-festoon'd bower,  
 The very air was charged with magic power.

We sat in silence 'neath the crumbling wall  
 And gazed with awe upon its arches tall ;  
 Thro' which in warlike might the baron bold  
 Rode forth, girdled with steel and spurred with gold.

And strong moss-troopers o'er the drawbridge sprang  
 'Mid helmet, lance, cuirrass and buckler clang,  
 While ladies from deep windows ivy-laced,  
 Waved scarfs to noble knights in armour cased.

I turned and looked into my lady's eyes  
 And they were deep as blue of Paradise,  
 And soft and gentle as Narcissus flower,  
 Distilling love with tender fresh'ning shower.

I touched her lips, and pressed her golden hair ;  
 I kissed a cheek, than Sharon's rose more fair  
 A brow e'en than the lotos fairer blows ;  
 A bosom, whiter than Idalian snows.

•  
Come then my love and as the hours go by  
We'll dream of love, true-love that ne'er can die ;  
Once more the holy pledge we will renew,  
One single thought, one soul atween us two.

Fair Luna o'er us spreads her web of lawn  
• Within its folds we'll lie till morning dawn  
Entangled in the flowing robe of night  
The fleeting hours unheeded wing their flight.

## THE DAWN OF MUSLIM CHIVALRY.

WE find at the present day in every civilised nation various orders of chivalry and knighthood, the badges or decorations of which are bestowed by the sovereign to the most distinguished and the bravest in the land. And when we look back across the ages, to study the historical development of these orders, and unearth the sources from which they sprang ; we find that they received the fire of their inspiration and drew their nourishment from the spirit of Islam.

Chivalry in the ordinary sense of the term, is generally redolent with warlike deeds, courtesy to an enemy, single-handed prowess, clemency to a conquered foe, and respect, adoration, and love to the "weaker" sex. To be a coward in battle was to be despised and spurned by those of stronger nerve and weightier arm. Such was the chivalry that gave to the Crusades a brilliance that made them unparalleled in the annals of history, and illuminated with a holier light the path of the conquering Arab. But true chivalry, apart from knightly valour, may be found beating in the bosom of the physical coward and of those who seek the path of peace. Moral courage is grander and nobler than physical, and both combined are the perfect man. Even though the deeds of Robert Bruce and "Good Lord James", of Bayard and Almanzor, of Richard Lion-Heart and generous Salah-ed-din, may cause the blood to mantle in crimson on my cheek, and make my pulse to throb ; I am no brave swordsman, and were I on the field of battle, perchance my limbs would tremble, my nerveless arms fall palsied to my side, and the ashen hue of fear disperse the crimson of my cheek ; yet, withal, I love my fellow-man ; I, too, would show him courtesy and clemency ; and within the literary arena would dare to wield my pen

and spill the midnight ink for his intellectual and moral emancipation. No nobler words were ever addressed to a woman than these by the valiant Graham—

“ But if no faithless action stain  
Thy love and constant word,  
I'll make thee famous by my pen  
And honoured by my sword.”

Had I a lady friend I might not, like the gallant Graham, be able to make her famous by my pen and honoured by my sword ; but I would at least honour and respect her as much as ever belted knight honoured and respected the fair lady whose favour floated from his helmet bar. Gentle deeds, true courtesy, and a noble soul are not the special prerogative of belted knight or crested earl. Beneath the peasant's broadcloth beats a heart as sensitive as that beneath the ermine of a king. From lowly blood has sprung the world's grandest intellects ; men whose pens were nobler far than swords, whose lives were sacrificed on the altar of humanity, and whose aspirations and thoughts cast upon the souls of men a diviner light than ever flashed from knightly steel.

Ah ! my pen, how prone thou art to wander ; but you and I must now return to the actions of the past to trace the rise of Muslim chivalry.

When Muhammed arose, with the fervour of divine enthusiasm in his heart and the breath of genius on his lips, and declared to the world a new evangel, a greater humanitarianism and a grander chivalry issued into being, burst into flower ; and his followers, imbued with the spirit and teaching of the Master, put into practise that humanitarianism and fostered that chivalry until its tendrils took root in every land, and their foes admired their courtesy and respected their might.

In the month of Ramazan, eleven years after the Flight, two bands of warriors stood facing each other on the field of Bedr. On the one side 300 Muslims under the Prophet ; on the other side 950 Meccans commanded by Abu Soffian the Omeyyad : Arab against Arab and relative against



relative. As was customary with the wild horsemen of the desert, the battle began with single contests, between warrior and warrior, in which the Muslims proved victorious. Soon the fighting became general. Meccan spear was ringing against Islamic shield and Muslim scimitar was striking fire from Kurayish crest. Young Omeir threw away the dates he was eating, shouting, as he did so, "These keep me back from Paradise," and rushing into the thickest of the fray found the martyrdom he sought. Though outnumbered by three to one, nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the Muslim brave three hundred. Hamza "Lion of God and His apostle," strong Omar and Ali, bore down all before them; and even as the day began to decline victory rested on the banner of Muhammed and defeat on the flags and penons of the house of Abd-ul-Dar. Islam had received an impulse that launched it to Cordova in the west and to the Ganges on the east; the flame kindled by the heroes of Bedr blazed through three continents in martial glory.

No nobler instructions have ever been given by a commander to his soldiers than those of Abu Bekr when sending forth his Mussalmans to the conquest of the north. Here, thirteen centuries ago, we have a ruler inculcating into his troops the purest principles of so-called modern humanity, mercy to his foemen, courtesy to women and tenderness to youth and age; even the beasts in the pastures are to be respected and the flowers of the field and the fruit trees not wantonly destroyed. During his Khalifate, wave after wave and tribe after tribe of those hardy sons of Arabia moved northward to the conquest of Syria and Iran—the merchant from the city, the wandering Bedouin from his tent on the pathless sand; the stripling, whose maiden sword had yet to drink a foeman's blood, the warrior in the zenith of his power and the aged chief who had stood by Abu Talib, and had watched Muhammed's youth; clans of Modhar, clans of Yemen, all nerved by newly born zeal and fired by the spirit of the youthful Omeir. What to them was death? It was but the path to immortality, to vineclad hills and flowery groves, the gate to the fields of Paradise. Let the Bridge declare how brave Muthanna stood; Kadesiya tell of Rustem's

death and Saad's might, the rolling Yermuck sigh for  
Byzantium's disgrace and shout for Khalid's glory.

A sweeping bar,  
Bright as a star,  
His scimitar  
Never at rest.

His Arab's prance,  
His shining lance,  
Leading the dance,  
Onward he prest.

With glazing eye  
Fixed on the sky  
Enemies lie,  
Great was his might.  
Hark to the smash!  
Where'er he dash  
The helmets crash,  
Valiant in fight.

Where foes are laid,  
Blood in the glade,  
Reeks on his blade,  
Glows on his face.  
There his barb trod,  
Drenching the sod,  
Sword of his God,  
Pride of his race.

Kindle the blaze,  
Monuments raise,  
Thunder his praise,  
Thunder for ever.  
Dirge of the brave,  
Over his grave,  
Cypresses wave,  
Waving for ever.

To the thunder of the Tekbir the Muslim warrior marched to battle, singing the praises of his mistress or reciting verses from the Koran. Revelling in single contests, each singled out an opponent and chased him through the ranks until he had slain his man or perished in the attempt. When lying before Damascus and other cities the opposing warriors challenged each other to combat, and many a brave encounter issued and many a lance was broken. Foremost in every individual enterprise was Khalid-ibn-Valid, "The Sword of God" and "the Lion of the Kurayish." He was ably seconded by the famous Derar, a hero round whose deeds romance has twisted many a flower and chivalry twined many a gem. Khalid in single combat took prisoner a commander of the Romans and, having changed his horse, was in the act of returning to engage another foeman, when Derar requested to be allowed to take his place, saying, "You have tired yourself fighting with this dog, therefore let me go." "O Derar," answered Khalid, "we shall rest in the world to come; he that labours to-day shall rest to-morrow." Even though the most of the exploits related of such men as Khalid and Derar are later additions, they at least show truly the spirit that animated the early Muslim conquerors, the founders of the greatest empire of the past—daring even to rashness. Though Khalid and some others may at times have claimed the full penalty of victory in battle, their word once given was never broken, and there was not wanting amongst them generals who, following the example of the Prophet at Mecca, treated cities they had captured with a leniency unknown up to that time. Abu Obeida spared Damascus when Khalid claimed the rights of having stormed it. When Jerusalem capitulated to Omar not a drop of blood was spilt in the city, the entry was peaceable and orderly, and the Christians were allowed the full exercise of their religion. How different this entry of the Mussalman in the seventh century from that of the Crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillion in 1099, when for three days the city was given over to pillage, to the mercy of a licentious mob of Crusaders, who put over 70,000 Muslims—men, women and children—to the sword.

When the famous Okbah entered Africa, and at the head of his picked cavalry pierced to the Atlantic and sighed for other worlds to conquer, we hear of no devastating policy. In the 89th year after the flight, during the reign of Welid, there entered Africa one of the greatest generals the world has ever seen, Musa-ibn-Nosyer. In a few short years he had planted the banner of Islam on the towers of Tanja and subdued all Northern Africa. By his clemency and justice he gained the respect, admiration and love of every tribe from the valley of the Nile to the shores of Mauritania. His record seems almost superhuman; still we hear of no firing of cities, nor of devastation of the country out of pure love of destruction or to satisfy revenge; Musa had his weaknesses no doubt, and in his old age his chivalry is eclipsed by that of his general in Spain; yet, even Musa's treatment of the Africans and Spaniards was humane and merciful compared to the barbarities of Attila, the Alani, of Genesic or of the commanders in the invasions of England by either the Danes or the Normans or of the wars in Ireland and Scotland during what is known as the rebellions of '98 and '45. In the year 711 A. D. Taric-ibn-Ziyad, the general of Musa, passed into Spain at the head of 7,000 men. Re-inforced by 5,000 horse, he advanced to the Gaudalete, where he was opposed by the Gothic army under King Roderick. Outnumbered as the Muslims were by over seven to one, the issue was for a time doubtful, now appearing to rest with Islam and now with the Cross, but on the seventh day the Goths were completely routed. So decisive was the Muslim victory that the Goths were unable to raise an army to again take the field to oppose the triumphant progress of the victors northward. A number of the larger cities closed their gates against the invaders, some even made a desperate stand, but so lenient were the terms granted to those who surrendered that soon all Spain, with the exception of the mountainous region in the north, was under the sway of Islam.

What a contrast was the conquest of Spain by the Arab-Moors to the expulsion of the Moriscos by *Les Rey Catolicos*, or the conquest of Mexico and Peru eight centuries later. Wherever Taric went, city after city fell into

his hands; and the terms granted were so liberal that the mass of the people, composed of the descendants of Iberians, Kelts, Alani, Suevi and Romans, were better than under the Goths. A large emancipation of slaves took place; agriculture was encouraged amongst the labouring class, and their condition was less servile than before; every person was allowed the free exercise of his or her religion; a period of prosperity had dawned for Spain. Well might Taric, when standing before the Khalif at Damascus, accused of avarice, make the proud reply, "Ask the Ture-Believers, ask also the Christians, what the conduct of Taric has been in Africa and Spain. Let them say if they have ever found him cowardly, covetous or cruel." The world has produced no braver son; Islam no finer cavalier; chivalry no nobler sword than that of Taric-ibn-Ziyad.

The treatment of Theodomir by Abdul-Aziz-ibn-Musa is worthy of mention as displaying the chivalrousness of the Muslims even at this early period. After the defeat of Don Roderick, Theodomir, one of his nobles, fled to Orihuela, where he was besieged by Abdul-Aziz, and was at last allowed to march out with the honours of war. And it may be as well to mention here that the law of first sending an ultimatum to an enemy before declaring war and the principle of allowing troops to march out of a conquered city were instituted into rigid rules by the Muslims. Theodomir had deceived the Arab by lining the ramparts with women dressed in the armour of men. Imagine therefore the surprise of the world-renowned conquerors when they beheld a band of old men and women follow Theodomir out of the city and discovered the trick he had played upon them. To the honour of the Muslims be it said, the treaty was held inviolate, and they duly appreciated the bravery of the defenders.

The contract signed by both generals still remains a monument of Islamic clemency and chivalry. It reads as follows :—

"In the name of God the Clement and Merciful !  
Abdul-Aziz and Tadmir make this treaty of peace.  
May God confirm and protect it ! Tadmir shall retain

the command over his own people, but over no other people among those of his own faith. There shall be no wars between his subjects and those of the Arabs, nor shall the children or women of his people be led captive. They shall not be disturbed in the exercise of their religion; their churches shall not be burned, nor shall any services be demanded of them, those expressed in this treaty alone excepted.....Tadmir shall not receive our enemies, nor fail in fidelity to us, and he shall not conceal whatever hostile purposes he may know to exist against us. His nobles and himself shall pay a tribute of a dinar (somewhat less than Rs. 10) each year, with four measures of wheat and four of barley; of mead, vinegar, honey, and oil, each four measures. All the vassals of Tadmir, and every man subject to tax shall pay the half of these imposts."

Muslim chivalry had dawned.

## MUSLIM KNIGHTS.

IN the early years of the Muslim domination in Spain, the feuds between the various tribes and between aspiring Emirs gave splendid opportunities for the development of martial prowess, when every man had virtually to guard his position by the sword, but in the various encounters not only the physical side but also the chivalrous aspect had also room and opportunity to develop.

In 743 A.D. Balj-ibn-Beshr deposed and executed Abdul Malek-ibn-Kattan, Emir of Spain. The followers and adherents of the dead Emir, led by Abdur-Rahman-ibn-Okba, advanced to avenge his death. The forces encountered each other near Calat-Rahba. Balj rode through the opposing ranks like a raging lion, seeking Abdur-Rahman and calling him by name. "Here I am," thundered Abdur Rahman, "Behold the son of Okba whom thou seekest." The fight, as became such renowned warriors, was hotly contested, but, aided by his superior horsemanship, Abdur Rahman transfixed Balj with his spear and gained for his victory the title of Almansur. We learn that this chieftain for his prowess in battle against the Christians gained the surname of "Knight Champion of Andalus." No more glorious dynasty ever held sway in Europe than that of the Spanish Omeyyads. This dynasty was founded in 756 A.D. by Abd-er-rahman-ibn-Muawiyah, grandson of Khalif Hisham. On the overthrow of the Omeyyads at Damascus by the sons of Abbas, he fled to Africa to escape their emissaries and their vengeance. The tribes of Spain were in discord; the clans of the north against the clans of the southern Arabs, the Berbers sometimes aiding the one sometimes the other, and on occasions fighting for their own supremacy. Called to Spain by a number of the leading Emirs he made himself master of Andalus. In spite of discord and disunion, by consummate bravery, resource, energy, wonderful powers of organisation and military genius, he overcame all difficulties and made himself ruler of Muhammedan Spain.

The Hawk of the Kurayish had accomplished a feat which made even Almansur, Khalif of Baghdad, thank God the sea rolled between him and the Omeyyad. Even Charlemagne, the greatest Christian of the period, pales before the lustre of Abd-er-Rahman. He selected Cordova as his capital and founded a dynasty that endured for nearly three centuries and which surpassed in splendour any other dynasty of equal length. His son Hisham was a mild and gentle ruler, when his brothers Sulieman and Abdullah rebelled, were defeated and taken prisoners, with the Omeyyad's usual generosity he pardoned both and conferred pensions upon them. During the reign of Emir Abdallah there lived the general Said-ibn-Sulieman Gudi. A cavalier of high merit, in him it was said were united the ten qualities which distinguish the noble and generous chevalier. It was this gallant poet and soldier who composed a poem on his comrade-in-arms, another noble cavalier, Suar-ibn-Hamdum, of which the following lines are a paraphrase from Mrs. Foster's prose translation :—

Already the dust of our feet has stricken the hearts  
of our foes,  
And darkened the face of the heavens, o'erwhelming  
the land as it goes ;  
And see ! from the power of our lances the foemen  
have turned in fear.  
They tremble and show us their backs, their blood is  
on falchion and spear,  
And the hot sabre quenches its thirst in the flesh of  
the flying,  
And the hoofs of our chargers are red as they sweep  
o'er the dying.  
The dark drops ! Rain all crimson ! It moistens the  
dust of the low-lying plain ;  
How they fly ! Hill and valley are close for them !  
Close ! and are crowded with slain.  
See ! see ! the pale forehead and cheek, how they  
shrink 'neath the glance of the brave  
As they throng the dark way 'neath the feet of the  
courser of freeman and slave.  
Then ask of the hero, Ben Hamdum, ask of him how  
went the fight ;



He will tell how we tore from the turbans the jewels  
of pride and delight ;

He will tell how the edge of our swords mowed the  
heads on the fields of our might.

And ask of Alhamrah's brave son, when the moment  
had come for the shock,

How he plunged on the ranks of the foemen as eagles  
that rush from a rock,

How he swept on a tempest amain, on the battle's  
incarnadined wave—

As mountains that fall on the plain and turn all to the  
dust of the grave.

Thus Allah has done to the false ones that fled from  
our banners ; their lot—

Over all came the dark wheel of Fate that none living  
shall flee—they are not !

Their lives are no more, not a trace in the hills or  
valleys is seen ;

They have passed, they are gone ; and it is, as they  
never had been.

Us and ours did they combat with wiles, horse and  
foemen alike they assailed.

With the craft of the coward and slave ; vile arts and  
machines we bewailed.

But the sons of Adnan and of Khatan ! What marvels  
they work ! deeds enact ;

Their leaders are lions in fury who pounce on their  
prey when attacked—

Red lightning the flash of their swords ! and the guer-  
don those chieftains seek !

'Tis the glory that hallows the brave ! The honour  
that heroes bespeak !

See ! see ! 'Tis the noblest of Kais—the sons of  
Omeya are lost—

'Tis Ben Hamdum whose blood-dripping scimitar  
flashes aloft thro' the host !

Where he rides 'mid the press of the battle the tur-  
bans are cloven and fall ;

And mark ! with the noblest and highest he has  
sprung to the summit of all !

The following lines paraphrased as the above were also written by Said Ben Sulieman on the death of Suar Ben Hamdum; in a battle outside of the city of Elvira:

The sword of the hero is broken! ye hills of Elvira  
ye saw him betrayed;

Yea! the weapon whose flashing brought tears to the  
• brightest of eyes, in the battle is laid;

The lance is now broken that clad ye in mourning, ye  
fairest of maids;

'Gainst the sons of Omeya he perished, the noblest,  
the bravest and truest of blades.

When he came, to the noble and lowly one cup he  
presented. The cup that he gave!

'Twas of death! for his weapon ne'er failed; the cup  
he presented to master and slave.

He is gone! ye and those of our best! in their  
thousands; tho' thousands to fill up the place.

Of the fallen avail not! when the lost is Suar Ben  
Hamdum the pride of his race;

For of ours shall one lance be but poorly repaid tho'  
the foe in their thousands are tost;

The fight is ne'er equal between us, unless we take  
tens for each life we have lost.

As we ride o'er the foemen we quench the fierce  
drought of our swords in the blood of their hearts;

In the river of crimson that flows as we ride, the  
bright sheen of the sabre departs.

Or, say that dark fortune has frowned and humbled  
the ranks of the brave and the just;

Do *their* columns not waver! They do! Yea, they do!  
The craven foe falls in the dust!

The blood of our brethren cries vengeance tho' deep  
in the grave; as the poet has said:—

“Of slaves doth the blood never rise up in redness.  
Vile fluid in vain is it shed.

One of the most interesting pastimes of the elegant Moors was that of romance or story-telling. Fiction had its rise under the Abbasides from whence we derived those fascinating tales of Genii and Peri, of fair ladies and noble youths, wonderful magic caves, lamps, carpets and horses.

The love for fiction passed into Spain; and later kindled the flame in southern France that brought into being the wandering troubadour and minstrel and spreading over Europe, culminated in the vast fictional literature of the present. In the evening, when the cares of business had been laid aside, the Moor beguiled the hours by a game at his favourite chess, or else he watched the dance, and listened to the song and the romance, to the tale of amorous knight or the deeds of prowess on the field of war. Andalusia was, during the tenth century, the seat of industry and culture and the home of good manners. Such was the environment in which chivalry was nurtured from its dawn to the golden glow of its noon-day glory.

During the reign of Hakem II, we find the renowned poet Yusuf-ibn-Harun, better known as Abu Amur, presenting to the Khalif two elegant poems—one on the Chase, the other on the duties and obligations of Chivalry. In the latter he gives the following ten qualities as distinguishing the noble cavalier:—integrity, valour, knightly honour, gentle courtesy, poetry, eloquence, strength, skill in the use of the lance, readiness with the sword and dexterity in drawing the bow. When the Arabs conquered Spain they settled in the fertile plains of Andalusia—"their beloved Andalus," and left unconquered the hilly region to the north along the shores of the green sea (the Bay of Biscay), and there among the mountains congregated the remnant of the Goths, there smouldered the fires of Christian Spain soon to blaze forth with the fury of a devastating furnace, and, replenished by the fanaticism engendered by the Crusades, destined to sweep the Muslim from the land.

During the period of the greatest glory of the Moor—the reign of the house of Omeya—the Christians began to extend their borders. Descending from the strongholds of the mountains like a swarm of locust they overran the land, stormed the towns, massacred all who resisted and carried the rest into captivity. These Gallicians, Asturians and Cantabrians who formed the nucleus from which sprung the Spains, were in truth barbarians compared to the polished Moor. The debatable land lying on the borders of the possessions of both were dotted with strongholds and well fortified towns, sometimes held by the Muslim, at

others by the Christian, as the tide of warfare ebbed and flowed. We learn that about the close of the tenth century A.D. the Muslim warriors who held the border forts had formed among themselves various military orders, the members of which devoted themselves to the use of arms and professed great austerity of life. They swore never to fly before a foe, but to die where they stood. It is probable that these military orders instituted by the Rabios, or Muslim knights, were the progenitors of the military orders of Christian Europe which they preceded by about a century. They came especially to the front during the reign of Hisham II, under his mighty Hagib, Almansur. So firm was the rule of Almansur, so skilful his organisation of the army that it became the most powerful machine of destruction of his day. Twice a year he declared war; twice a year a tempest of Muslim steel swept northward, either clearing its way through the heart of Castille, or Leon, or through the mountains of Navarre. The strongest cities of the north went down before him. The invincible Moor even pierced to Compostella in Galicia, where it is said he watered his horse in the basin which held the holy water in the church, and he carried off bells to adorn the Mosque at Cordova. Historians have attributed his success largely to the unstinted bounty he gave his soldiers and his love of justice, "which virtue," says the writer of the Chronicle of Silo, "Almansur held dearer, if I may say so, than any Christian." He also proved himself a chivalrous conqueror, setting free the Count of Lara on the murder of his sons by a Christian enemy. One grand scene in the life of the Muslim ever rises vividly before us. All day Christian and Moor had struggled for the mastery, but even as the sun began to decline the tide of victory swung in favour of the Mussalmans. Count Garcia of Castille, wounded, was borne from his horse. His faithful Castillians refused to leave him, and, dismounting, they formed a ring of steel around the chief. There stood that small, but firm, undaunted band awaiting death, calmly, steadfastly, without a quiver, expecting every instant to feel the shock of the Moorish horse, who, lance in rest, waited the signal for the charge. "Son of Amer," thundered Sulieman-ibn-Hakem, the fierce leader of the Berbers "Why doth not the signal of thy

hand command the destruction of those accursed dogs, whose howls defy us and insult heaven." For an instant Almansur gazes on the brave devoted band, a tear is seen to glisten in the mighty conqueror's eye, his hand is raised, and amid deathlike stillness, rings his reply:—"Son of Hakem, knowest thou not it is written (Kuran V. 34.): 'He who slayeth one man, not having met with violence, will be punished like the murderer of all mankind, and he who saveth the life of one man, shall be rewarded like the rescuer of all.' Make room, sons of Ishmael, make way let the Christians live and bless the name of the clement and merciful God."

Obedient to the signal of the commander, the Muslim ranks swing open and through the avenue march the Castillian knights bearing the body of their chief. Over the field amid respectful silence; and even as the last man disappears amid the hills, a mighty shout breaks forth, rolling from hilltop to hilltop, it is the Arab song of victory. "Victory cometh from Allah"; Almansur was victorious once again.

He was the *beau ideal* of the soldiers; while he lived not a Christian dared to lift his head; but at last the great unconquered fell before the greater conqueror—Death, mourned by his troops, who lost in him their leader and their friend. With his passing the decline of the Moor set in. Well might they engrave upon his tomb the word:—

"The traces he left behind him will tell who he was, as if thou sawest him with thine own eyes."

"By Allah! the succeeding generations will never produce his equal, nor one who knows better how to defend our frontiers."

In such fear did the Christians hold him, with such terror did he inspire them, that a monk wrote in his chronicle after the year 1002, the sole entry—"In this year died Almansur, and was buried in Hell."

Such were the days when Muslim knightly orders sprang into existence—roses from the midst of thorns—the days when every Muslim cavalier might, like Muzzafer, wave his lance, in the face of his foeman and shout, "This is my parentage! this my nobility!"

## THE GREATEST GLORY OF THE OMEYYAD.

No more glorious dynasty ever held sway in Europe than that of the Spanish Omeyyads. They were on the whole just rulers, generous both to friend and foe, their clemency to rebels being exceptional. On the whole they were beloved by their subjects and treated on equal terms with the Emperor of Germany and the Kings of France and Italy, and Greece. In so much respect was Abd-er-Rahman III held by the European potentates for his learning and justice, that they called upon him to adjust disputes that had arisen between themselves in regard to boundary lines and other complications. The time of Spain's greatest prosperity was during the reigns of Abd-er-Rahman III, Hakem II and Hisham II. Andalusia was then one of the great centres of commerce ; her cities were filled with merchants from all parts of the civilised world. The ports of Valencia, Almeria and Seville teemed with shipping and argosies of merchandise left daily for foreign lands. Grain waved in luxuriance upon her vegas ; the palm, the pomegranate and other fruit of Eastern climes bloomed upon her hillsides. The principal cities were lighted at night with street lamps, and public baths and hospitals were in every town and hamlet. At a period which preceded the Norman conquest of England by half a century. The Spanish Omeyyads were not only poets themselves, and versed in the science of the day, but they also encouraged learning throughout their dominions. When the decline of the Abbasides had set in at Baghdad, and the light of Islamic science and literature began to wane in the East, in the West its glory dawned brighter than ever on the hills of Andalusia.

During the reign of Abdallah, the grandfather of the great Khalif, the country had been rent by internal strife—a rebel, Ibn Hafsun was powerful enough to threaten even the capital itself ; while Ibn Hajaj held practically independent rule in Seville ; this ruler was one of the most learned scholars and one of the noblest cavaliers of Spain. The beautiful Lady “Moon”, who visited the West during

his administration of Seville is said to have <sup>been</sup> sung on her return to the East—"In all the West I find no right noble man save Ibrahim, and he is nobility itself."

Though Abd-er-Rahman was but a youth when the sceptre of the Omeyyads passed into his hands, he was no weakling like his grandfather who preceded him. He was no sooner seated on the throne than the command went forth for every Emir to send in his submission, and to enforce his rights the bugle-blast of war echoed amid the sierras and once again in martial glory the swords of Islam, the banners of Andalus, marshalled at Cordova. For fifteen years he waged incessant war, chief after chief submitted. while the Christians of the north also learned to respect the prowess of en-Nasir, During the last thirty-four years of his rule, Spain attained the greatest prosperity that had ever fallen to her lot. It would, as a Christian historian has said, have been well for her if the great Khalif had possessed the power of living for ever.

During his reign the poetic faculty, always brilliant among the Arabs, developed astoundingly. They wooed the muses from their dusky seats amid Arcadian valleys fair; brightest gems of Eastern thought woven in pearly language rare. They not only wrote poetry, they talked poetry and even the generals exhorted the warriors in verse. Abd-er-Rahman was himself a poet of a high standard. During his declining years the "green-eyed monster," melancholy, seized hold of him, and in reply to the cheering verses of a friend he is said to have sent the following lines:

"How can be choose but sigh, whose life is wasted  
In ceaseless tears? When shall the moment come  
That brings for this grieved heart a brighter lot?  
Are mine the cares that as the wine-cup circles  
Betake themselves to flight? Alas! my friend!  
It is not so. Past are my hours of joy,  
The roses of my life have lost their bloom:  
The lilies of my garden bend their heads  
Before the storm that may not be confined  
And knows no stay. Me waits the gloomy wing  
Of rayless night; and never morning's beam  
Shall chase again the shadows closing round me."

The man who penned those lines was cast in no ordinary mould ; he had caught a scintilla of the fire that burns on the altar of genius fanned by the breathing of God. A despot in power, he employed that power for the good of everybody, and under his beneficent rule Christian and Mussalman lived in peace, happiness and contentment.

Abd-er-Rahman was followed to the throne by his son Hakem II, the learned, one of the greatest scholars of the period, one of the grandest in Islam's galaxy of noble names. Having as his tutors and companions the most learned men of his father's court, his greatest ambition was to gather together the largest and most valuable library in the world, and for this purpose he kept men travelling throughout the East, collecting rare manuscripts and bargaining with authors for new books. Philosophers were always welcome at his court, and his library was open to all scholars no matter what their religion. His collection is said to have numbered over 600,000 volumes. The works of the Greeks were translated into Arabic and commentaries written thereon. There were also valuable treatises on Grammar, Rhetoric, Algebra, Chemistry, Astronomy, Botany ; Natural History, Philosophy, History, Irrigation, Agriculture, Architecture and the art of war. Ahmed-ibn-Ferag collected a book of poems entitled "The Garden" and presented it to the King ; the famous Granadine, Ibn Isa El Gasani presented a treatise on Geography, also an elegant work, "Description of the Comarcas of Elvira." A precious collection of books on the arts and sciences was made by Kadfa, daughter of Jafaar-ibn-Noseyr, who composed fine verses. Radhia, "The Fortunate Star," a freed woman of Abd-er-Rahman, was renowned for her verses and profound erudition in historical analysis ; she travelled through Africa and all Muslim Asia, lecturing on her tour and receiving the applause and admiration of the learned. Though a book-worm, Hakem was son enough of the great Khalif to take up arms and drive the Christians from his territory when they dared to invade it. But, inclined to be peaceable, he was conciliatory in his manner, and, whenever he could do so with honour, cast the heavy weeds of war aside. During his reign Spanish literature reached its highest pinnacle of development.



On his death the House of Omeya tottered to its fall. He was followed by his son Hisham II, this prince was wholly overruled by his mother, and about two years after his ascent there came into power Mohamed-ibn-Abdallah ibn-Abu Amer, the famous Almansur. The favourite of the Sultana, he gained complete ascendancy over the Khalif, and became controller of the whole power of the state. The methods he employed to attain to the position were, to say the least of them, unscrupulous, he never hesitated to remove anyone who barred his way. But once in power he ruled justly and in battle even the Christians speak favourably of his chivalry. His whole life was a period of warfare between Muslim and Christian. Every spring and autumn the banners of Andalus gathered at Cordova. From Seville, Elvira, Merida, Badajos and Sarragosa, a torrent of steel swept through the Christian realms. Fifty-two campaigns the terrible Moor conducted against the kingdoms of the north. Zamora, Astorga and Leon lay in ruins behind him, and he stabled his horse in the sanctuary of St. James. While Almansur lived victory rested on the banner of Islam. Busy and all as the great minister was carrying out his campaigns and attending to the affairs of state, he found time to devote to science and art. His palace to which the learned were invited was a gorgeous edifice rivalling even the wonderful Ez Zahra. On his warlike expeditions his books were carried along with him, and poets followed in his train, to sing his praises, extol his victories and relate the prowess of his Mussalmans. On his death the dominion of the Omeyyads went to pieces; split up into petty kinships continually at war with each other, until they were gradually swept away by the encroaching Christians of the north. The gorgeous palaces and gardens became a ruined waste. For a time Granada, revived the glory, nurtured beneath Nevada's snows, the last stronghold of Islamic power in Spain.

From Cordova's smiling fountains  
 From Elvira's winter snows,  
 Sea-beat coast and inland mountains,  
 Pressing north against the foe,  
 Andalusia's banners go.

Onward, on to victory passing,  
O'er the crest of many a hill,  
Scimitars and lances flashing,  
Soon of death to drink their fill,  
Pouring forth in ruddy rill.

Thro' Cantabria's mountains far  
Pierced Almansur's Moorish lance ;  
Thro' Leon, Castille, Navarre,  
Moordom's noblest Emirs prance ;  
Eastern banners gaily dance.

Sons of Islam, knight, commander,  
Line on line they outward span,  
With the lance of great Almansur  
Glittering in the Muslim van,  
Defender of the Law, Kuran.

Servant of Khalifa Hisham,  
Victorious in each campaign ;  
Greatest soldier ever Islam  
Launched o'er ringing fields of Spain,  
Ever drenched her streaming plain.

## CORDOVA, THE PRIDE OF THE MOOR.

"Cordova! do I near thee, my bright home,  
Or dost thou fly my steps? Thy wished for towers  
Show not their heads to him whose longing eye  
Looks but for them in all the wide expanse  
Of the far heaven,—(*Mohammed, Khalif of Cordova.*)

DEEP-SEATED, inherent in every individual of the human family is a subtle chord, which, when touched by intrinsic influences reverberates to the music of the old homeland. Love for the scenes of our childhood is strong within us, and kissed by the air of sentiment, blazons forth on the flushing brow and in the hectic throbbing of the heart. The German loves his Rhine; the Switzer love his Alpine valleys and his glacier-crested hills; the Norwegian and the Scot their foaming cataracts and frowning mountains, while the son of Erin loves his rolling uplands of rock, and whin, and heather, and his meadows of pasturage and bog.

This tender flower of the human passions flourishes in all its sympathetic beauty in the East; and in his languid, metaphorical, poetic dreaming, the Oriental sings of the pleasures and delights of his native city, describing and decorating its glories with all the painted imagery of Eastern thought. They sang of Damascus, "Diamond of the Desert," of its crystal waters and its splendid mosque; of Baghdad with its aromatic fountains, gem-encrusted palaces and gorgeous shrines; of Merv "Queen of the World;" and of the delights of Shiraz, the home of poetry and of beauty, of which city the Persians have a saying, that if "Muhammed had tasted the pleasures of Shiraz he would have prayed Allah to make him immortal there."

Transported to the West by the wave of conquest, the Muslims of Andalusia learned to love their native place, the adopted home of their conquering fathers, and this love became deep-seated in their hearts. They embellished its beauty, and sung its glory even as their fathers

praised the glories of the East. To them Cordova was a garden planted with the choicest flowers, a necklace strung with jewels, her daughters were the brilliant diamonds, her philosophers and scholars the flashing sapphires, the rubies were her Muslim knights.

During the reign of the House of Omeya, Cordova was the finest city in the world, renowned for its art, science and literature; its architecture was the most magnificent in Europe, although it may not have rivalled Byzantium in colossal buildings. Its princes and nobles were the most courteous and refined; they were the patrons of learning, and under their tutelage the city became the home of learned men, who hastened to its accademies from all parts to learn algebra, chemistry, astronomy and history; to breathe the delicious air in its wondrous palaces and in its perfumed gardens; rich with scented flowers and the blushing fruit of Eastern climes, and eager to drink a deep draught from the stream of knowledge which poured in swelling volume, unchecked, from Islam's springs of learning in the grandest city of the West.

Cordova was both the heart and brain of Andalusia—the source from which her rivers of bounty ran. The wells of her hospitality were filled to overflowing; and the dews of her liberality distilled fresh showers rich with the refined gold of charity. Her very gardens emitted an odour like that of Paradise, and the water of her fountains was sweeter than the finest flavoured wine; her balmy air than the pouting lips of a chiding amorosa, heavy with the breath of many flowers.

“Whence comest thou,” asked Almak-h-zu-mi,

“From Cordova,” replied Abu Bekr.

“When?”

“Just now.”

“Then,” said the Sheik, “come nearer to me, that I may smell the air of Cordova on thy garments.”

With that he began to smell the traveller's turban and to kiss it all over, breaking out into impromptu verses, in praise of his native city.

"O my beloved Cordova, when shall I see thee again ?

Thou art like an enchanted spot ;

Thy fields are luxuriant gardens ;

Thy earth of various colours resembles a block of rose-coloured amber."

Even after the decline of the city, after the fall of the Omeyyad, a poet of the eleventh century was constrained to write—

"Do not talk of the court of Baghdad and its glittering magnificence ;

Do not praise Persia and China and their manifold advantages ;

For there is no spot on earth like Cordova,

Nor in the whole world men like the sons of Hamud."

Cordova was to them the seat of all the virtues—a bride decked with pearls, resplendent in her wedding garment ; the home of martial valour and of grand ecstatic song. Her sons loved to roam her flowery gardens, and when the soft, soft twilight of the evening kissed the dusky brow of night to recline midst fair sweet solitudes, in the shadow of the myrtle or beneath the fronds of stately palms. Drenched by the freshening spray of tossing fountain and miniature waterfalls ; beside cascades and tranquil ponds wherein the light of burning stars shone reflected like clustering pearls clinging to the neck of a Mauritanian beauty.

Though the imagery of the Eastern poet is usually high-flown, in her palmy days Cordova deserved all the praises her poetic sons and daughters lavished upon her. She was indeed worthy of the love of the elegant Orientals of the West, worthy of their grandest metaphor, worthy of their noblest song. But enough of this, or perhap I shall hear some Persian brother exclaim, "He is spinning out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument."

“Cordova,” says an old Arab writer, “is the bride of Andalusia. To her belong all the beauty and the ornaments that delight the eye or dazzle the sight. Her long line of Sultans form her crown of glory; her necklace is strung with the pearls which the poets have gathered from the ocean of language; her dress is of the banners of learning, well-knit together by her men of science; and the master of every art and industry is the hem of her garments.”

Al Makhary says:—“The inhabitants are famous for their courteous and polished manners, their superior intelligence, their exquisite taste, and magnificence in their meals, dress and houses. There thou wouldst see doctors shining with all sorts of learning, lords distinguished by their virtues and generosity; warriors renowned for their expedition into the country of the infidels, and officers experienced in all kinds of warfare. To Cordova came from all parts of the world students eager to cultivate poetry, to study the sciences, or to be instructed in divinity or law, so that it became the meeting place of the eminent in all matters, the abode of the learned, and the place of resort of the studious; its interior was always filled with the eminent and noble of all countries; its literary men and soldiers were continually vying with each other to gain renown, and its precincts never ceased to be the arena of the distinguished, the racecourse of readers, the halting place of the noble, and the repository of the true and virtuous. Cordova was to Andalus, what the head is to the body, or what the breast is to the lion.”

Cordova was over ten miles in diameter and contained over one million inhabitants; over fifty thousand houses for the aristocracy; and more than one hundred thousand for the common people; there were seven hundred Mosques and nine hundred public baths; from sunset to sunrise street lamps diffused a mild radiance over the pathway, while watchmen patrolled the city, The Guadalquiver twined through flowery banks and murmured in the shadow of castellated palaces; while mighty aqueducts brought cooling water from the mountain-born virgin-pure springs and snow-nurtured streamlets of the Sierra Morena.

They had names for every garden and names for every hall; in the "Garden of the Water-wheel," and the "Meadow of Murmuring Waters," they listened to music and singing performed by the Masters of the East; they played the favourite game of chess; told stories or recited gazelles in praise of the mistress whose raven tresses, snowy bosom, and curving eye-brows had cast over them the glamour of love's passionate bewitchery. There was a palace of flowers; a palace of contentment; a palace of lovers; and one called by the Sultans after the old home of the Beni Omeya—"Damascus." "Its roofs rested upon marble columns and the floor was inlaid with mosaics." Of it the Poet sang:—

"All palaces in the world are nothing when compared to Damascus, for not only has it gardens with most delicious fruits and sweet smelling flowers, beautiful prospects, and limpid running waters, clouds pregnant with aromatic dew and lofty buildings; but its night is always perfumed, for morning pours on it her grey amber, and night her black musk."

The great Mosque and Alcasar of the Omeyyads was the tiara of all; and in their description of its wonders the Islamic historians have almost exhausted the matrix of thought. When Abd-er-Rahman I was securely seated on the Amirate he turned his attention to the improvement of the city; he built the fine bridge of seventeen arches, which still spans with massive grasp the river; he also began the great Mosque in 784 A.D., spending upon it 80,000 pieces of gold. The building was intended to outrival, when completed, the great Aljuma of Damascus, but the "Hawk of the Kurayish" was transported from the bowers of Andalusia to the Halls of Paradise before the completion of his designs. His son and successor Hisham I hurled the forces of the Mussalmans into France, and with the spoils taken from the sack of Narbonne, he finished the Mosque in 793 A.D. But Sultan after Sultan kept adding to it; enhancing its beauty, adorning the interior with the trophies taken from the Frank and Goth.

Stanley Lane-Poole, Britain's most accomplished historian of Islam, says:—

"Nineteen is the number of arcades from east to west, and thirty-one from north to south; twenty-one doors

encrusted with shining brass admitted the worshippers ; 1,293 columns support the roof, and the sanctuary was paved with silver and inlaid with rich mosaics, and its clustered columns were carved and inlaid with gold and lapis-lazuli. The pulpit was constructed of ivory and choice woods, in 36,000 separate panels, many of which were encrusted with precious stones and fastened with gold nails. Four fountains for washing before prayer, supplied with waters from the mountains, ran night and day, and houses were built at the west side of the Mosque, where poor travellers and homeless people were hospitably entertained. Hundreds of brass lanterns, made out of Christian bells, illuminated the Mosque at night, and a great wax taper, weighing fifty pounds, burnt night and day at the side of the preacher during the month of fasting. Three hundred attendants burnt sweet-smelling ambergris and aloes wood in the censers and prepared the scented oil which fed the ten-thousand wicks of the lanterns. Much of the beauty of this mosque still remains. Travellers stand amazed before the forest of columns, which open out in apparently endless vistas on all sides. The porphyry, jasper and marbles are still in their places ; the splendid glass mosaics, which artists from Byzantium came to make, still sparkle like jewels on the wall ; the daring architecture of the sanctuary, with its fantastic crossed arches, is still as imposing as ever ; the courtyard is still leafy with the orange trees that prolong the vista of columns. As one stands before the loveliness of the great Mosque, the thought goes back to the days of the glories of Cordova, the palmy days of the Great Khalif, which never will return."

About six miles from the city, Abd-er-Raham III built a suburb in honour of his Sultana Ez Zahra, and he called it Medina-ez-Zahra, the "City of the Fairest." Not a vestige of it now remains, but the elaborate descriptions of the historians allow us to form some idea of its splendour, Lane-Poole writes concerning it—

" The hall of the Khalifs at the new city had a roof and walls of marble and gold, and in it was a wonderful sculptured fountain, a present from the Greek Emperor,



who also sent the Khalif a unique pearl. In the midst of the hall was a basin of quicksilver; at either side were eight doors set in ivory and ebony, and adorned with precious stones. When the sun shone through these doors, and the quicksilver lake was set quivering, the whole room was filled with flashes like lightning, and the courtiers would cover their dazzled eyes."

An old Arab author in his description of its wonders says :—

Travellers from distant lands, men of all ranks and professions of life, following various religions—princes, ambassadors, merchants, pilgrims, theologians and poets—all agree that they had never seen in the course of their travels anything that could be compared to it."

The Western historian adds :—

"Beautiful as were the palaces and gardens of Cordova, her claims to admiration in higher matters were no less strong. The mind was as lovely as the body. Her professors and teachers made her the centre of European culture; students would come from all parts of Europe to study under her famous doctors..... Every branch of science was seriously studied there..... Astronomy, geography, chemistry, natural history—all were studied with ardour at Cordova; and as for the graces of literature, there never was a time in Europe when poetry became so much the speech of everybody .....The whole Muslim world seemed given over to the Muses. In arts, sciences, and civilisation generally, the Moorish city of Cordova was indeed 'the brightest splendour of the World.'"

Such was the Pride of the Moor when Andalusia was at the highest pinnacle of fame and glory, when the martial shout of Islam echoed along Espana's plains, and when the hills of "blest Andaloos," rang with the tekbir of the Muslim: and the white banner of the House of Omeya led the forefront of the world's battle van, and guarded the lists in the tourney ring of learning.

## THE GOLDEN AGE OF CHIVALRY IN SPAIN.

AFTER the death of Almansur the dynasty of the Omeiyads rapidly collapsed. The Muslim dominion was rapidly broken up into small independent states; the Walis of Seville, Saragosa, Valencia, Badajos, Toledo, Murcia and others striking out as independent rulers; and forming their districts into petty kingships, continually at war with each other and with the Christians, who were gradually encroaching and threatening to subjugate all Muhammedan Spain.

The Crusades had now been instituted; a religious mania had seized Europe; cultivation of the land was neglected, everything was in disorder, and Christendom poured her millions to the East. Duke and baron, vassal and serf, horde after horde, of ragged, dirty, half-mad wrecks of humanity poured over Europe like the death-laden waves of a devastating pestilence on to where Byzantium rose over the Bosphorous—the last bulwark of what had been the power of Rome, still reflecting with a pale and sickly lustre the glory that was Greece—on to the shambles in Palestine, like sheep to the slaughter, either to rescue the Holy City and the Sepulchre from the hands of the Saracen, or to mingle their blood with the sand the feet of their Saviour had trod.

Europe was mad indeed. At home the grain waved, yellow with ripeness, or lay rotting on the ground unheeded; the grass grew on the floor of the hut of the peasant; for those who ought to have reaped the grain, cultivated the soil, sown the harvest and kept the hut in order were lying stiff and stark in Palestine, their bones bleaching by the Kedron, Orontes and Jordan; their tombstone Lebanon, garlanded with snow; their epitaph written on the mountain side in lines of gloomy cedars. Silence reigned supreme in grand baronial pile; courtyard and halls, empty and deserted, no longer disturbed by the tramp of mail-clad men or prattling babes; the wild bird built his nest in the lady's bower, and the hooting of the owl

resounded in the chamber of the knight. Master, mistress and servant were in the Holy Land, the Red Cross gleaming on their robes and surcoats, and blazoned on their shining mail.

And yet it was all in vain ! The Crescent still waves from Jerusalem's towers, the Muslim scimitar still guards the sacred ground, grasped by a son of the Osmanli, mighty race.

In Spain the religious animosity between Muslim and Christian, in the early part of the struggle, was less marked than in the East, owing to their proximity to each other. There the Christian had only to cross the river or the mountain range to encounter his Muslim foeman ; and that foeman was generally to be found at home, and he generally found the Moor as good a cavalier as himself ; his superior in culture and good manners and his equal in martial deeds. Christian warriors were to be found assisting Moorish chiefs against each other and against other Christians, while Moorish chevaliers fought for Christian against Christian and against other Muslim lords. By this intercourse the Spaniard was gradually absorbing the manners and accomplishments of his Islamic neighbour, and passages-at-arms took place repeatedly between the various warriors of both races. Respect and admiration for each other's prowess became inculcated into their fighting. The Spaniard was becoming by this contact better versed in letters, and was beginning to cultivate the poetic art and slowly developing a literature.

When or how the manner of conferring knighthood first originated it is difficult to say. As early as 1068 we find the king of Seville, on the occasion of his despatching troops to attack the kings of Granada and Malaga, conferring the dignity on his son Prince Muhammed—afterwards famous in Spanish history—and bestowing upon him a shield, with a golden crescent on an azure field surrounded by a border of golden stars. Conde also makes mention of an aged Muslim knight, one of the Rabitos. The words used in both cases by the Arab chronicler would seem to indicate that the occurrences were not of an exceptional kind, so we may infer that the custom had originated

earlier. This conclusion is strongly supported by the fact that the Arab historian was a contemporary and eye-witness of most of the scenes he describes. We also find that over fifty years previously Abdur Rahman, son of the great Almansur, was addicted to the pleasures of chivalry. It is evident that in this case the historian refers to jousts, the tilting yard and tournament. The fashion had extended to Africa, we find the king of the Morvades, Yusuf, exchanging black slaves for Christian youths with the people of Andalusia. He had them brought up in the exercise of arms, made them accomplished horsemen, conferred on them the dignity of knighthood and kept over two hundred constantly attached to his person as a bodyguard. It is worth noticing that during the long life of this monarch—about 100 years—it is said that he never pronounced the death sentence upon any one.

At this period there also arose the ideal knight of Christian Spain—Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, *Mio cid el Campeador*. The history of his life is shrouded in ballad and romance—he cuts but a sorry figure in the Moorish histories—through which runs a slender, very slender thread of truth. My Lord, as he is familiarly called, was the Cœur-de-Lion of Spain. His great strength made him always the challenger in combat, for which he received the title “el campeador.” Of Titanic build and herculeanean powers, rough in manners, his word could never be trusted; a free-lance who fought for any party so long as it suited his purpose; he lacked the courtesy and culture of the Moor. Ever ready on the slightest provocation to deal out his barbaric idea of justice, he became an outlaw; disassociating himself from king or country he waged ruthless war against Moor and Christian alike; his famous sword Tisano dealt death to one and all. The mass of the people may have admired him, the nobles feared him on account of his prowess. Chivalry only perched on his banners and the love of the people only gathered round him after he was dead. In his nature there was more of the ferocity of the tiger than the nobility of the lion. His treatment of the inhabitants of Valencia was perfidious. It is only on a very rare occasion that a flash of true nobility can be seen in his actions. Taking him, all in all,

we are not entitled to claim that "my Cid the challenger," ever exhibited more than an occasional outburst of a nobleness of character to be found among warlike savages.

The time was one for knightly deeds. The land was seething with a fighting mass of humanity. The warfare was internal and incessant ; Almeries, Almoravides and Almohades swept over the country like flaming brands of fire, holding sway in turn. Other kings, other lords, flashed across the scroll of history like meteors through the night ; a blaze of sudden glory, a streak of golden dust and, then the inky sky again. During the two centuries of irruption the darkness was being constantly illuminated by those flashing points of light ; now a meteor, now a rocket of surpassing brilliance drenched the firmament with a throng of stars. Saragosa produced sapphires in the Beni Hud ; Badajos gave us a topaz in the Beni Alaftas ; Cordova pearls in the Beni Hamud, and Seville gave us rubies in the Beni Ab'ad.

Such a state of matters could not last; where a race or a religion is divided against itself with militant foes upon its very borders it is almost bound to succumb. Toledo, that city whose ancient towers beheld the morning and the evening of the Goth ; beheld the conquering veterans of Taric, the twilight of the Moor, and the grandeur of Omeyya's race ; now beheld the marshalling squadrons of the north and bowed its haughty head unto the Nazarene. Next Cordova, with its memories of the glory of the past, and the unrivalled magnificence of Merwan's sons—the Hawk of the Kurayish ; the Great Khalif ; Hakem the Scholar, and Almansur the scourge of Leon and Castille. Then Valencia and Seville passed from the sceptre of Islam, and the hope of the Moor centred in one man, Mohammed-ibn-Alhamar. In 1238 A.D. he founded the kingdom of Granada, the last stronghold of the Mussalman in Spain. In that elysian garden of the south, gathered the remnant of the Muslim dominion, some of the noblest families of Islam. There clustered the finest cavaliers of the Kabyle ; Zahanga and Lamtuni, with the haughty Gomeres, princes of the Beni Zeragh and princes of the Beni Zegri, with Omeyyads and Almeries, all ranged under the banner of the Beni Nasr, Sultans of Granada.

For architecture, science and literature, Granada almost revived the glories of Cordova and Baghdad in their palmy days. Built on the mountain side; below stretched the Vega, rich with crops of waving grain, mulberry, vine, palm and pomegranate. On the plain the Moor circled on his flying steed and learned the exercise of those arms in which he had no superior. There tournaments were held by the Sultans, to which knights came from all parts of Europe to settle their own differences by an assault-at-arms or for the honour and favour of their lady-love to run a course or break a lance with Moorish chief. The ladies crowded the balconies, unveiled, and flashed love-lit glances on their lovers or on the victor bestowed the chaplet of honour. Now a De Luna or a Mendoza, a De Guzman or a Ponce displays his skill, now a host of turbaned warriors are darting round the lists on their matchless steeds; there an escutcheon bears a myriad silver stars on an azure field; while another bears a ship tossing in a tempestuous sea, there an azure shield is strewn with argent crescents, and another bears a bloody heart pierced with an arrow upon a silver ground; there shines the bend of the sons of the Royal line; azure, crimson, gold. Now a prince of the Beni Nasr leads the tilting; now a swarthy knight dashes into the yard with waving lance and glittering scimitar. The flashing eye, dark as the lady's favour, shining jet black against his turban's gold, the waving locks dark as the raven's wing, proclaim him chief of the famous Zegri race, the pride of Granada's sons. The city rising like a jewel on the mountain brow; the Vega carpeted with a fabric finer than Valencia's softest silk; the hillside draped with a tapestry gemmed with the jewelry of nature. No wonder there blossomed on its spacious field the empress of flowers, the rose of chivalry, the crimson of her heart blending with the pomegranate's red. The air was filled with the perfume of flowers, laden with the odour of chivalry. Its rosy glow lit the fingers of the clouds and mantled on Nevada's snowy brow.

Chivalry reached its greatest splendour at the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century. Gorgeous pageants were to be found in every capital in Europe. It

culminated in Christian Spain during the reign of Juan II, under his patronage and that of his great Constable, Don Alvaro de Luna, his favourite, a man who rose to be the most powerful noble in the land, holding the king entirely in his power. He held tournaments on a scale of magnificence such as Christianity, and possibly not even Islam, had ever seen before. He delighted in all things pertaining to chivalry, and in grand pageants, having in his service youths of the noblest blood of Spain. Wherever he went he was followed by a brilliant cavalcade of cavaliers dressed in the gorgeous gala attire of knighthood with the horses also most magnificently caparisoned. It was during this period that Castillian literature received its greatest impulse and Castillian poetry assumed a superior form. Spanish knights travelled all over Europe in search of adventure, and were the admired of every European Court.

A Muslim flower had bloomed, blossomed, and borne fruit on Christian soil.

## GENTLE DEEDS.

"He alone is noble  
Who doeth noble deeds."

GENTLE deeds! How sweet the words; soothing as celestial music floating in the musky air, balmy with the odour of the wild thyme, the geranium and rose; sweet as the air itself when drunk with the morning dew it sipped from the bell of hyacinth and heather; drank from the cup of ranunculus, kissed from the lips of the daisy or gathered from the lash of the bird-eye like myosotis and its comrade the blue speedwell. Falling on the throbbing heart with soothing tone; staying the mad career of the deadly lance and checking the fiery ardour of the warrior. How fair the fruit of Granada—the pomegranate stem, its root in the Muslim heart, its sap the blood of Islam—fair as the ruby lips of morning, when the dewdrops cling like jewels to the beard of the shining grass; fair as love, when her passion mingles its burning red with the snows that crown the mountains rising from her panting breast.

When a boy I read in my schoolbook one of the noblest tales of chivalry I ever heard. So deep an impress did it make upon my boyish heart that, though the name of the poem and the names of the characters are long since forgotten, the essence of the tale still wanders after all those years down the *via dolorosa* of my memory, and the words of the noble toast remain indelibly stamped upon the matter of my brain, at least one brilliant, borrowed gem in a casket containing very few originals. A company of knights were feasting, and the wine cup circled time and again the banqueting hall. At last the leader of the band sprang to his feet, shouting, "a toast! a toast! Let each knight pledge his lady-love," and so the toast went round the board, each youthful knight holding aloft the brimming cup, pledging and drinking to the maid he loved the best. It came to the turn of an elderly knight, well-known for his sincerity, his reserved and silent nature. None had ever heard him mention lady's name: none ever read the



inmost secrets of his heart. All waited eagerly to hear his toast. As he raised the ruby glass on high every breath was hushed. Slowly, calmly came forth the words, "My mother!" Well might every head be bowed and every cap be doffed, and every cup be raised and drained. In silence still as death every knight drank to the noblest toast that ever fell from knightly lips.

Ah! how some amongst us wish we too might pledge that toast, but it was not to be. We were not to learn a mother's love nor know a mother's care; the roses of her life had faded; she had passed to the last long sleep; the willow drooped its branches, the grass spread a carpet of green—entwined with the white of the daisy and the gold of the buttercup—over her grave before even our baby lips had learned to lisp the words "My mother."

One of the most notable deeds during the period of disruption and the African invasions when swarms of the swarthy sons of Africa poured across Spain, innumerable as the sands of their desert home; was that enacted by Yacub Almansur. At the battle of Alarcos where Alphonso VIII. of Castile was defeated, with great slaughter, twenty thousand prisoners were taken by the Moors. The prevailing custom of the period was to carry prisoners of war into captivity as slaves, but on this occasion they were all released by the orders of the king.

One of the most illustrious cavaliers of this disturbed epoch was Abu Abdullah Muhammed-ibn-Hud, the last great chief of the valiant race who had held Saragosa against the inroads of the Christian; and after the fall of that city had ruled in other parts of Spain. Poets wrote elegant verses in his praise extolling his virtue and heroic valour. After the death of Ibn-Hud, King Jamie, of Aragon wrested Valencia from the hands of Ibn-Zeyan, and the Muslims passed forth from the gates of a city they had brought to an acme of prosperity it had never arrived at before, and which it was soon to lose under the rule of the Christian. Under the Moor Valencia had a population of nearly 600,000 inhabitants, it is now returned as 215,000, while fifty years ago it was only about 130,000.

Cordova had already passed into the hands of Castile, and the kingdom of Seville—held by a chief of the Mohades—was reduced to a small district. The only prop of Muslim sovereignty in Spain was Muhamed Alhamar at Granada. King Ferdinand swept down on the towns still held by the Moor. The king of Granada, finding himself unable to cope with the power of Castile, formed the bold resolution of passing through the lines and presenting himself to Ferdinand in person. He was received as became his rank, and a treaty was made in which Granada acknowledged king Ferdinand as its suzerain, agreeing to pay an annual tribute and to send troops to assist the Castilians against the Aragonese and the Comarcas of Seville. To such an extent had the Muslim power declined since the day when Cordova was the centre of the world's science and literature; the brightest jewel in the diadem of Islam; when mighty Almansur at the head of the banners of Andalusia carried dismay throughout the kingdoms of the north. By the persuasion of Alhamar, Carmona, Lorca and other towns surrendered and received favourable terms. In 1246 Ferdinand sat down before Seville, aided by a well-appointed body of cavalry sent by the Sultan of Granada. Numerous encounters took place between the cavalry of Algrani and the Granadines, many an act of prowess and chivalry was enacted, in which the Muslim cavaliers were the envy and the admiration of the Christian army, renowned alike for their peerless horsemanship and their dexterity with lance and scimitar.

As king after king of Granada passes before us we read time and again of their love and delight in all the games of chivalry and the pleasant pastime of the tournament, and of courteous exchanges between them and the Kings of Castile, and also between the subjects of both kingdoms. When Mohamed II visited Alphonso at Cordova, the Moorish historian tell us how Alphonso conferred upon him knighthood after the fashion of Castile, and how festivals were held in his honour.

King Muhamed-ibn-Ismaïl on the occasion of the marriage of his son Abu Abdallah Yusuf with the daughter of the King of Fez, and also of the nuptials of the Prince

of Fez with Zahira, daughter of Abu Ayan, a noble Andalusian cavalier, held many jousts and tournaments. To these festivities came cavaliers from Spain, Africa, Egypt, and France, all of whom were received with great honour and lodged by the Granadines.

Prince Philip, brother to the King of Castile, was an ardent friend of Alhamar, and was present during his last moments. Nunez de Lara, a noble Spaniard, was slain in battle against the troops of Abu Yusuf, King of Morocco. His head was severed from the body, and sent to Mohamed II of Granada enclosed in a casket. When the head was brought into the presence of that king, he covered his face with his hands, and, turning away from the stony glare of the well-known eyes, exclaimed, "Guala; O, my faithful friend; this thou hast not deserved at my hands;" He commanded that the head of his dead friend be embalmed, then enclosed in a silver casket, and sent under honourable escort to Cordova to be interred along with the body. When a king of Castile died the Muslims were in the habit of suspending hostilities and putting on mourning as a token of respect to the rank, or the generosity or the martial valour of their foe.

To such an extent did the Sultans delight in the practices of chivalry that we find Ismail, the father of the famous warriors Muley Abu-l-Hasan and Abu Abdallah- ez-Zagal, entering the lists in person and taking part in the exercises, he being an accomplished horseman.

In the final struggle between Muslim and Christian for supremacy in the south of the peninsula, noble and chivalrous deeds were enacted by both combatants and many a genteel encounter took place. During the terrible fight in the mountains over Malaga between a Spanish army under Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon and a company of Moors under Cid Abu Abdallah, the Count of Cifuentos was attacked by six Muslim soldiers, when Reduan Ben Egas spurred his steed into the midst of them shouting, "This is a mode of combat unworthy of good cavaliers." The soldiers drew back, when the Count and Reduan engaged each other lance to lance, but the Moor proving the superior the Count surrendered to his gallant foeman.

During the great struggle at the siege of Malaga, a band of Moors led by Ibrahim Zenete penetrated into the heart of the Christian camp, when, entering one of the tents, Zenete beheld a number of startled youths rousing from their slumbers. Smiting them with the flat of his sword, he exclaimed, "Away imps; away to your mothers." A fanatic Dervish reproached him for his clemency.

"I did not kill them," replied Zenete, "because I saw no beards."

Such are a few of the gentle deeds which made the Muslim respected and honoured by his greatest opponents, a few pebbles picked from a myriad gems.

Nine hundred years are gone since the star of Cordova declined; four hundred years have passed since fair Granada fell, but their memories still linger fondly in the Muslim heart. Even as ancient Britons longed for the return of King Arthur with his famous sword Excalibur, or Spain awaited the second advent of Roderick, the last of the Goths, so the Moor longs for the day when once again Cordova shall resound to the Muezzin's cry as he summons the Faithful unto prayer.

He sees once more the spacious Vega, rich with mulberry and trailing vine, while over all sparkles the thousand towers of the queen city of the west—alabaster and jasper set in brilliants, crested with Alhambra's ruby glow. There the silver Xenil winds through groups of stately palms; there the Darro bears upon its turbulent bosom Nevada's winter snows. Once more, as in Granada's palmy days, the plain is animated with busy life; splendid pavilions of Almeria's finest textile fabrics, filled with Hispano's loveliest maids—there droops the Andalusian drowsy lash; there flashes the dark eye of Castile. All look towards the heights as Granada's gate swing open. Forth dashes a magnificent cavalcade of turbaned cavaliers, dressed in gorgeous panoply, mounted on richly caparisoned chargers, fresh from the wilds of Barbary, horses of generous race, the housings of the steeds bearing the devices of the owner's lady-love, or slashed with yellow denoting jealousy or

with violet the flame of ardent love. As the knights approach silken scarfs are waved, and a shout breaks forth—

*"Caballeros Granadinos*

*Aunque Moros hishoff d'algo,"*

Ringling through the valley, echoing from rock to rock ; on, on, down the ages, through the blue empyrean it is borne. Again the echo, again the shout breaks forth—

"Knights of Granada ;

Gentlemen ; albeit Moors."

## THE GENTLEST KNIGHT.

IN the preceding articles I have outlined the principle means by which chivalry arose in Europe in the middle ages ; in the culture and contact with the Moors which fostered and encouraged the magnificent and stately pageants and tournaments ; whose recital still stirs the hearts of youthful readers ; and around whose stem romance has woven many a splendid garment and on whose ideals fiction has founded many a tale. The main source was contact with the Spanish Moor, but it was not the only source. Although the Crusades in the East produced no gorgeous cavalcades and grand tournaments, like Granada, Queen city of the West, yet, constant intercourse with the Saracen, his higher civilisation, his courtesy to his foemen, his polished manners and his chivalry on the field of battle, had all an abiding effect in uplifting Christendom. The Crusades had their greatest effect in advancing Western culture and education by means of the contact brought about by the commercial enterprise they facilitated if they did not actually produce ; and not by any process of polishing the manners of the uncouth knights who formed the great mass of the Crusading armies. In regard to the orders of chivalry we have to recognise, that they were theoretically of two kinds, although having a common base, in the spreading of Christianity and the overthrowing of the Mussalman. Those in Spain which were mainly ecclesiastical and those having their origin in Palestine, mainly military. In the first ecclesiastical authority was predominant, in the latter the lay elements, although both were founded on the religious basis and both contained both laymen, priests and fighting prelates, and the sovereign was nominally the head of each. The two great military Orders of the East, the Templars and the Hospitallers, were instituted in the beginning of the twelfth century while the Spanish were instituted in the later half. This would seem to tell against the theory that they had their origin in the Rabitos ; still it is possible that the Christians in Palestine having before them something like the same problem of

border warfare presented to them as the Moors had, may have been led to adopt the same methods of organisation to meet it. However this may be, these orders as a whole had very little to do with the progress and development of chivalry; the most chivalrous gentlemen were generally to be found outside their ranks, not in them. We know practically nothing of the members of the Rabitos; of the Christian orders the records go to prove that they were the most barbarous, cruel and bloodthirsty of the various elements forming the Crusades, and that they remained so until their extinction as influential political and religious organisations.

Although there is no intention of dealing here with Muslim chivalry in the East; yet, no series of articles on such a subject would be complete or in the least worthy of the title, that did not say something concerning the one prominent figure in the Crusades, who towers above all others, on a pedestal of his own, both as a man and king. The gentlest knight, the chevalier *par excellence*, the paragon of knighthood, the *beau idéal* of Saracenic chivalry, *sans peur et sans reproche*, the beloved of his friends and the respected of his foemen; he whose name has passed into the romances of the progeny of his fiercest opponents, and whose magnanimity and unparalleled generosity has been lauded even by his enemies: *el-Melik-en-Nasir Salzh-ed-dunya-wa-d-din*, the King strong to aid, the Honour of the World and of the Faith; called by the Christians "Saladin," the courteous opponent of Coeur-de-Lion.

In all history I doubt if one sovereign can be produced who can be pronounced to be the superior of the Kurdish Chief, and very few can be even posited as his equals. Sovereigns there have been who were greater warriors and rulers, who were greater scholars, but none who were better *men*. Amongst those who might be put forward as his peers the following stand out prominently: Abd-er-Rahman the Great Khalif of Cordova; Akbar, Emperor of India; his brother El-Adil, and it is possible also Asoka, the Buddhist Emperor of Hindustan, although the materials for a genuine history of the reign of this monarch are far from complete. Although the above sovereigns are pre-eminent among the

rulers of the earth, we are not to expect even in their case perfection of character; the perfect man has yet to be produced. In passing judgment on such men we must take into consideration the times in which they lived; the people ruled over, their opportunities for good or evil, and their position. Having done so, we shall find that they surpass in the most important features of character the rulers of the nations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both as men and rulers. Abd-er-Rahman and Akbar were the greater scholars; but they lack the dominant note of gentleness, and of sympathy with suffering; the simplicity of life, charitableness of feeling, and mastery over certain hereditary passions that we find in Salah-ed-din. When Azaz had fallen before his arms and he had brought the Zengids of Aleppo to terms, there came to him the little sister of es-Salih. He received her with honour and asked her, "What is thy wish?" "The Castle of Azaz," she said. He therewith restored to its old owners on her request the fortress that had cost him a laborious struggle and loading the princess with presents, at the head of his staff escorted her back to the gate. The histories are full of his deeds of goodness and of kindness both to friend and foe.

When some Crusaders of rank were captured before Acre, he received them with courtesy, clothed them with robes of honour, supplied them with furs to keep out the cold and sent them to Damascus. When Richard of England was ill, he sent him pears and peaches and refreshing snow from the mountains; when his horse was killed beneath him in a battle before Jaffa, he presented him with two swift Arab steeds. We search the annals in vain for any such acts of kindness and courtesy on the part of Richard.

When Balian of Ibelin broke his oath, given after Hittin, never again to bear arms against him; the Sultan, in spite of all, not only granted a safe-conduct for his wife and children to proceed from Jerusalem to Tripolis but he sent an escort of fifty horse to accompany them. The clemency with which he treated the cities he conquered reveals a nobility of character possessed by few; while his treatment of Jerusalem is a striking episode in a great career. When Godfrey and his rabble host entered Jerusalem the scene



was one of indiscriminate slaughter. "When our men had taken the city," says the Christian chronicler, "with its walls and towers, there were things wondrous to be seen. For some of the enemy, and this is a small matter, were reft of their heads, while others riddled through with arrows, were forced to leap down from the towers; others, after long torture, were burnt in the flames. In all the streets and squares were to be seen piles of heads, and hands and feet; and along the public way foot and horse alike made passage over the bodies of the dead." Nearly 70,000 persons were butchered; father and son, mother and daughter, youth and age; there was no distinction of sex. What a difference when the victorious troops of Salah-ed-din marched into the re-conquered city; his guards under responsible commanders patrolled the streets and prevented violence or theft or insult, not a Christian was ill-used, not a woman degraded. It was left for a Muslim Sultan to teach Christianity the meaning of mercy, tolerance and forgiveness, it was also left him to teach them charity. El-Adil set free a thousand people without ransom. Kükbury set another thousand free and sent them home, and then the Sultan ordered a proclamation to be made, that all the old people who could not pay the ransom were free to go forth; and their going lasted from sunrise unto night. "Such was the charity which Saladin did, of poor people without number."

The same Christian writer—Ernoul, squire to Balian—tells us how, when certain dames and damsels whose husbands or fathers had either been killed or taken prisoner entreated his mercy he had the captive knights sought out and released. To the wives and daughters of those who had been slain he gave handsome presents. "And," says Ernoul, "he gave them so much that they gave praise to God, and published abroad the kindness and honour which Saladin had done them."

"Fortunate," says Stanley Lane-Poole, "were the merciless, for they obtained mercy at the hands of the Muslim Sultan.

'The greatest attribute of heaven is mercy;  
And 'tis the crown of justice, and the glory,  
Where it may kill with right, to save with pity.'

If the taking of Jerusalem were the only fact known about Saladin, it were enough to prove him the most chivalrous and the great-hearted conqueror of his own, and perhaps any, age."

Before the peerless chivalry and illustrious actions of the Muslim, the majesty of Philip of France and the barbaric splendour and renown of Richard of England fade into insignificance as the stars are eclipsed by the brilliance and glory of the sun. "After Saladin's almost Quixotic acts of clemency and generosity," says Lane-Poole, "the King of England's cruelty will appear amazing. But the students of the Crusades do not need to be told that in this struggle, the virtues of civilisation, magnanimity, toleration, real chivalry, and gentle culture, were all on the side of the Saracens."

Salah-ed-din was highly sympathetic and sensitive to pain in others and the sight of such generally brought tears to his eyes. One day, while lying before Acre, a woman came from the camp of the Crusaders seeking for her baby who had been carried off by the Saracen soldiers during an attack. The guards allowed her pass, and told her to make her complaint to the Sultan, "for he is very merciful," they said. Touched by her anguish, the tears stood in the Sultan's eyes, and he had the camp searched until the child was found and restored to its mother, he then sent them both back in safety to the enemy's lines.

"Our Sultan," says Baha-ed-din, "was very noble of heart, kindness shone in his face, he was very modest and exquisitely courteous."

"Before I saw his face," said a Frankish prisoner, "I was sore afraid, but now that I have seen, I know he will do me no harm." He was set free.

He died on Wednesday, 4th March 1193, aged fifty-five years.

"He left," says Lane-Poole in his admirable history, "Neither house, nor goods, nor acres, nor villages, nor any sort of personal property. The Great Sultan died almost penniless. It would be hard to imagine a

nature more unselfish, devoted to higher aims, or more wholly lovable. Had he been made of sterner stuff or skilled in the prudent economies and saving foresight of mere selfish statesmanship, he might perhaps have founded a more enduring and united empire, but he would not have been Saladin the type of generous chivalry."

" Mine eyes have seen the days of his majesty,  
King strong to aid, the sum of piety,  
Bane of the crucifix—idolatry,  
Banneret of right and generosity,  
Salah-ed-Din,  
Lord of Islam and Muslimin,  
Saving God's House from the Nazarene,  
Serving the Holy Places twin  
Victorious Yusuf, son of Ayyub, of Shadhy's kin :  
God water his grave with showers of clemency,  
And grant him in mercy's name the meed of  
Constancy."

(*Baha-ed-Din.*)

"I have ended my record on the day of his death," says his faithful Secretary, "God's mercy be on him. My aim was to deserve the compassion of the Most High, and to stir men to pray for Salah-ed-din and to remember his goodness."

Yes, let us remember his goodness ; let it be our duty not only to extoll, but to practise those virtues and maintain the nobility and dignity of those Muslim cavaliers ; to live and act in the true spirit of Islam ; to spread abroad the chivalrous principles of the glorious evangel taught by the great Arabian. To hand on the heritage we have received from the past, enriched by our own ideals and experience, to our sons and to our son's sons so that they may limn ideals we never limned and tread paths we never trod ; so that our progeny may righteously exclaim, "The world is the better because they lived, and humanity the nobler because they taught." The star of hope has risen in the morning sky, the day-dawn is breaking and the islands catch the gleam, soon will the rays embrace the hill-tops of the world.

## MUSLIM KNIGHTS.

Graceful the curving of charger,  
Graceful the tilting of lance ;  
Proudly the banners are streaming  
Proudly the cavaliers prance.

Graceful the gleaming of armour,  
Gorgeous the glitter of spears ;  
Cohorts of Muslims advancing,  
Noblest of Araby's peers.

Ever the foremost in conflict,  
Foemen shall cower and reel ;  
Ruby drops drip from the lances,  
Crimson the glare of the steel.

Flowers of the Islamic knighthood,  
Gallant in combat and chase ;  
Princes of Modhar and Yemen,  
Pride of the Saracen race.

Death's in the goblet they offer,  
Deep shall the enemy drain ;  
When the dread music of battle  
Pours forth its martial refrain.

## ZENGI.

The sword you gaze upon my child,  
 Thine eyes with eager passion scan ;  
 Has flashed amid the tempest wild,  
 Where Zengi led the Muslim van ;  
 The jewelled hilt whose rays of fire  
 Might scorn the glory of the sun ;  
 The tempered blade whose touch of ire  
 Made streams of deepest crimson run ;  
 Unmatched on many a field of fight,  
 But dimmed in many a battle won ;  
 It made and unmade many a knight,  
 For it was Zengi's own, my son.  
 Methinks I see his streaming crest,  
 Like snow-white foam upon the wave,  
 Where'er the thronging squadrons prest,  
 Amid the bravest of the brave.

Listen ! and I will tell you, lad,  
 The story of a soldier true ;  
 No abler chief for combat clad,  
 Nor better brand in danger drew.  
 When but a youth of fourteen years  
 Sages revered his comely form ;  
 He led his father's cavaliers  
 In summer calm and winter storm.  
 His early days foretold renown,  
 Predestined by the hand of Fate ;  
 Princes upheld his youthful crown  
 Until he grew to man's estate.  
 It was a time of bitter strife,  
 Of broiling day and night alarms,  
 Murder and plunder both were rife,  
 And every Emir slept in arms.  
 Crusaders from the ferrine west,  
 Imbued with mad religious hate,  
 Were rushing in frenetic zest,  
 The Muslim to annihilate,

For Baldwin's brow the diadem  
 Of Palestinian empire bound ;  
 The kingdom of Jerusalem,  
 And hallowed Bethlehem's holy ground.  
 Their legions reached Diyar-bekir,  
 And surged around Damascus wall,  
 And Syrian blood besprent the spear  
 In fair Edessa's palace hall ;  
 And rapine followed in their path,  
 The pestilence that famine bears ;  
 Haran and Sidon felt their wrath,  
 And Tyre and Tripolis were theirs.  
 No lance to stay the fearful scourge,  
 Where Kedron's fairy waters flashed,  
 Nor champion's voice the Muslims urge  
 Where the Orontes droning dashed.  
 In vain the people sought relief  
 From fierce oppression's blighting breath ;  
 And overcome by fear and grief,  
 Even the doughtiest prayed for death.  
 But all was changed when Zengi first  
 In battle couched Islamic spear,  
 And over the Orontes burst  
 On his victorious career.  
 His eye with battle fire aglare,  
 His swarthy cheek with triumph flushed ;  
 That blade ! Damascus made, was bare,  
 And with the blood of foemen blushed.

I saw him on Tiberias plain,  
 In youthful ardour lead the van,  
 When blood distilled like winter rain,  
 And Maudud led the Mussalman.  
 'Twas there he played a knightly part,  
 And won his spurs on tented field,  
 And earned the love of every heart  
 That homage will to valour yield.  
 'Mid western knight and Frankish peer,  
 And Syria's martial Emirs keen,  
 No more renown'd cavalier  
 Than gallant, young, Imad-ed-din.

I saw his mettled coursers prance,  
 His banners with the Khalif lined,  
 When Dubeys and his Arab lance,  
 On billows swept, incarnadined ;  
 With daring heart Antar, the brave,  
 Against him sped in proud array :  
 To break in pieces, wave on wave.  
 The finest swords of Araby.  
 I seem to see him once again  
 Breasting the billows of that sea,  
 Beneath him dead and dying men :  
 The Arab's choicest chivalry ;  
 Before the Sultan's eye that hour,  
 Of gentle deed and courtly grace,  
 The foremost on the run for power,  
 Leading the veterans in the race.  
 It was not there he made his name,  
 But by the Jordans rippling wave ;  
 It was not there undying fame  
 Her wreath of greenest laurel gave ;  
 It was not there he was revered,  
 But by Orontes turbid tide ;  
 It was not there his name was feared,  
 But on the Jordan's western side ;  
 He was the first the torch to light,  
 And bid the European pause ;  
 The first to meet the Christian might  
 As champion of the Muslim cause.

I think I see the chieftain now  
 By dark Atharib's lofty keep,  
 The thunders lowering on his brow,  
 His eyes where lurid lightnings sleep.  
 I saw the warlike passions rise  
 Upon his brow as morning light !  
 I saw the fury in his eyes,  
 As lightnings thro' the darkest night !  
 The turbans glittered on the plain,  
 Amid the hills the battle flags ;  
 The eagles swooping in our train  
 Forsook the eyries on the crags.

We challenged and the foe replied,  
 And long withstood us man to man,  
 For they were warriors picked and tried,  
 Of Normandy and Frankistan.  
 We met defiance with our mines,  
 And mangonels the turrets swept,  
 Closer and closer drew our lines,  
 Day after day we nearer crept.

Unto their aid with all his might  
 Jerusalem's Christian sovereign came ;  
 He knew those sparks of transient light  
 Were heralds of devouring flame ;  
 They came to meet us ; 'twas the choice  
 Of prince and baron, banneret ;  
 And we, aroused by Zengi's voice,  
 For the assault impatient fret.  
 The cry, " Give them a taste of Hell ;"  
 Was answered from the frowning rock ;  
 And then against the infidel  
 Our chargers bounded to the shock ;  
 Into that sea of steel we rode,  
 As rivers pouring forth in flood ;  
 Our blades a brighter crimson showed  
 Than ever sprung from slavish blood ;  
 Onward, as speedy as the wind,  
 Charge after charge the Emir led ;  
 They rose before us, and behind  
 Ruin a tragic glory spread ;  
 The falchions leapt in tongues of flame  
 Where'er our Arab coursers trod,  
 The bodies of our foes became  
 The scabbards of the swords of God !  
 But few escaped the martyr's crown  
 Amid the Frank and Norman peers ;  
 The solemn, silent stars looked down  
 On red Atharib's rayless spears.  
 The Crescent of the Seljukees  
 Was floating over every height,  
 The song of victory on the breeze,  
 The clarion of the Islamite.



You yet may know the battlefield,  
 For bones are crumbling there to dust,  
 And riven helm and battered shield  
 Are lying there defaced with rust.  
 Edessa, lad, his glory made ;  
 He toyed with Amid, to beguile  
 The spears of Jocelin ; so delayed  
 His march before its gates awhile.  
 Deceived, they went, an erring band,  
 And weak defended left the town,  
 And we departed by command  
 To haul Edessa's crosses down.  
 As reapers in the field of death,  
 As brother Muslims side by side ;  
 To guard the honour of the Faith,  
 To bear the brunt, and turn the tide.  
 Onward to reap the swathes we went,  
 Onward to pass the foemen's flank,  
 Unloosened rein and body bent,  
 Bridle by bridle, rank on rank ;  
 Line after line the horsemen go,  
 And head by head the chargers run,  
 With spears and turbans row on row,  
 It was a wondrous sight my son.  
 The sun of Islam rose again,  
 And on our banners flashed success ;  
 We met the Franks in their domain,  
 And paid them for their wickedness ;  
 We stormed Edessa town at last,  
 And vengeance whetted every blade ;  
 For every insult of the past,  
 A shambles of the place we made ;  
 We would have razed it to the ground,  
 Its turrets with the desert laid,  
 Destroyed its ramparts ; but the sound  
 Of Zengi's voice the slaughter stayed.  
 Our Emir's valour thro' the lands  
 Was bruited by the Muslim's lips,  
 And unto distant western strands  
 Was carried by the Christian ships.

•  
And yet they slew him, slew the man  
Who from oppression gave relief ;  
No more his eye the battle scan ;  
'They slew him ! Slew our peerless chief !  
No more in front his turban shine ;  
Th' assassin's dagger pierced his breast,  
•No more his lances lead the line,  
Nor sabre scourge the seething west.

## THE RAPE OF FLORINDA.

A palace on the Tagus stood, a noble pile,  
 Built by Don Roderick in Gothic style  
 To gratify the wishes of his queen :  
 The turrets mocked the morning with their sheen ;  
 The song of birds resounded on the air,  
 Perfume of flowers of fragrance rich and rare ;  
 While gushing fountains tossed their mimic sprays,  
 And tiny cascades murmured songs of praise ;  
 In leafy bower and grove the crooning dove  
 And maiden fair re-told their tales of love.  
 In this abode, with its enchanting bowers,  
 The Gothic monarch whiled away the hours ;  
 The pleasures of the table had their charms,  
 He thought his kingdom safe from foreign arms ;  
 In weak indulgence all his time was spent,  
 And idle courtiers festive merriment ;  
 Degenerate nobles held him as in thrall  
 And their example brought about his fall ;  
 The sensual passions that had dormant lain  
 When first his sabre made him lord of Spain,  
 Now sapped by pleasure, passed beyond control,  
 Luxurious life had seared the sovereign's soul.

One summer day, in noontide's scorching ray,  
 When silver Tagus, murmured on its way  
 And Nature languished in the sultry heat,  
 And lazy courtiers sought a cool retreat,  
 Where grassy slopes 'neath stately trees were laid  
 And arbors, myrtle-covered sank in shade.  
 To where his consort's own apartments lay  
 Don Roderick was constrained to wend his way :  
 Altho' those private chambers scarce had known  
 The voice of man, for woman's voice alone  
 Those gorgeous arcades, fairy gardens knew,  
 Where beauty's rarest treasures, fairest grew.  
 While passing by an alcove, on his ear  
 The sound of merry laughter rippled clear ;  
 And thro' an eastern casement, almost hid  
 An overgrowth of jasmine flowers amid :

And thro' the overhanging flowery maze  
 A scene of beauty met the monarch's gaze.  
 Around a fountain in a sylvan court  
 His consort's damsels in the sun disport ;  
 Some plucked the myrtle, others ivy twined,  
 And some asleep on grassy slopes reclined :  
 And some within the fountain's sparkling wave  
 Their lithesome limbs with cooling waters lave.  
 The busy voices told discussion raged,  
 And some keen rivalry the point engaged,  
 Among the women of the East and West  
 Each claimed her nation as the handsomest ;  
 And to maintain the point, with fingers deft,  
 Each maid in haste in twain her garment reft ;  
 The proudest beauties of the Gothic court  
 Revealed a row of shining limbs in sport.

Amid the group a Mauritanian maid  
 A form majestic on the lawn displayed ;  
 A slender waist and finely-curving hip,  
 And limbs unrivalled in their workmanship,  
 Eyes dark as sloes that languid lashes crown,  
 And ruby lips, with skin a deep nut-brown ;  
 And mingling with her cheek's nut-coloured hue  
 A tinge of crimson roses kindled thro' ;  
 In due proportion rose each dusky mound,  
 Her supple figure seemed to skim the ground.  
 Amid España's beauties gathered there  
 Could any with the Moorish maid compare ?  
 They soon bethought themselves, those damsels gay,  
 And turned to where the young Florinda lay  
 Asleep upon a bank. The glow of health  
 Upon her cheek bestowed an ample wealth  
 Of loveliness ; and youth and innocence  
 Their lavish store of purity dispense ;  
 Beneath her robe her bosom rose and fell  
 As gentle as the ocean's tranquil swell ;  
 Her parted lips revealed an ivory set  
 As white as foam where angry billows fret ;  
 To hide the orbs the eyelids strove in vain :  
 " Behold," they cried, " the fairest maid in Spain !"

And in their eagerness to show her charms  
 Her dress unloosed ; she started in their arms ;  
 And thro' the casement bars the Gothic sire  
 Beheld a scene that set his veins on fire ;  
 Her cheek with mantling blushes burned and shone  
 As faintest sunrise blushing into dawn ;  
 A matchless form as purest marble white  
 Disclosed itself unto Don Roderick's sight  
 No maiden under Mauritanian skies .  
 Displayed a pair of limbs like those fair thighs ;  
 The swelling breasts in perfect contour rose ,  
 And dusky vales in purple shade repose ;  
 The wanton sunlight on her body played ,  
 And every move her youthful charms betrayed ;  
 The virgin fields and meadows still unwrought  
 To hide, in vain the tapering fingers sought ;  
 No lovelier figure dazzled Paris eyes  
 When naked Venus claimed the beauty prize ,  
 And Juno strove to win the golden globe  
 And even modest Pallas doffed her robe .

From that day henceforth with alluring art  
 King Roderick tried to gain the maiden's heart ;  
 Animal passions roused his sexual heat  
 And laid him captive at Florinda's feet .  
 But all in vain ; no wanton woman she ,  
 A virgin chaste of spotless purity ;  
 Her silken lashes drooped whene'er he gazed ;  
 The heaving bosom told of anger raised ;  
 On either cheek a red-spot's mounting flame  
 Enhanced her beauty with a girlish shame ;  
 His amorous glance no secret answer drew .  
 With each repulse his passion stronger grew ;  
 One fierce desire alone his soul possessed ,  
 To win or die upon Florinda's breast .  
 His midnight dreams unveiled her agile form ,  
 And daylight visions only swelled the storm ;  
 To conquer, conquer, was his only thought ,  
 In spite of all and, whether she would or not .  
 And chance betrayed Espana's fairest flower  
 And placed her in th' adulterous sovereign's power ;  
 No art would tempt her, and no wiles allure ,  
 But force alone would make the victory sure .

Helpless she lies distraught at her disgrace,  
No arm to save her from the king's embrace.  
In Afric lands, where Moorish turbans stream,  
Her father's lances shine and helmets gleam ;  
She feels his grasp, his hot breath fans her cheek ;  
Her lips go dry, she tries but fails to speak.  
Seduced ! A deed of shame is written now  
Upon the Spanish monarch's guilty brow ;  
Florinda ravished by a perjured king ;  
But fate shall speedy retribution bring ;  
As Helen, ravished by a Trojan boy,  
Brought woes unnumbered on the homes of Troy.  
The doom of Spain is writ in runes of stars,  
Beyond the main, the threatening scimitars ;  
A narrow sea ; a fleet of ships appears ;  
A one-eyed warrior and a host of spears ;  
A flowing river and a distant coast ;  
The marshalling squadrons of the Gothic host,  
A shout of Allah and a rushing flood ;  
A crash of steel and thickening pools of blood ;  
They sink and die ; the Muslim banners soar  
The rape's avenged, the Gothic rule is o'er.

## DEATH OF MUSA-IBN-NOSEYR.

Dead ! Musa the son of Noseyr dead !  
 A stillness reigns, as if a silent dread  
 Of some impending cataclysm fell  
 On one and all ; only to break and swell,  
 Rolling from door to door and street to street,  
 As woman's lips and warriors voice repeat.  
 Who was the soldier ? Who the chief that lies  
 In Wadi-l-Kora ; and for whom the cries  
 Resound, which tell of deep respect and grief ;  
 You ask ? This is the story of the chief ;  
 And these the actions made his falchion feared ;  
 And these the deeds that made his name revered ;  
 And made him famous in the east and west :  
 Of all the generals of his day the best.

When scions of Omeya held the sword,  
 And Abd-el-Malek was Damascus lord :  
 Abdul-Aziz as chief in Pharoah Land  
 The cause maintained with trenchant spear and brand ;  
 That Musa made our name and glory great  
 And added kingdoms to the Muslim state.  
 When Hasan son of Noman was disgraced,  
 Musa was o'er the Africa army placed ;  
 The path that Okbah trod he trod again  
 With hardy soldiers, swarthy featured men.  
 Amid his train were Syrian scimitars,  
 The lance of Egypt and the sword of Fars ;  
 Bound by their Faith, a single purpose knew,  
 To win or die in Islam's service drew.  
 There many a veteran who with Hasan stood  
 When brave Kahina led the Berber brood ;  
 And striplings by their fathers' deeds empowered  
 With stainless blades in battle undeflowered.  
 Rank after rank they went, breast unto breast  
 Waving and flowing manes, hollow and crest ;  
 Chargers were spurning fast, onward they sped ;  
 Into the waste they passed, so were they bred.

Unerring o'er the desert, side by side  
 The tireless spearmen with the Emir ride.  
 As whirling foamflakes flashing in the sun,  
 The showy turbans glittering as they run.  
 Battles were fought and finished many a feud,  
 On many a field the falchions were inbrued.  
 He led us on, the son of Noseyr true,  
 Beneath his eye the Muslim's bravest drew.  
 The foemen yielded slowly, length by length;  
 And many a desperate fight impaired our strength,  
 As tribe on tribe unfurled their fighting flags.  
 From Egypt valley to the Atlas crags.  
 But every man heroic actions wrought  
 And Allah blessed the cause for which we fought;  
 The stoutest guards were broken, armour rent;  
 Onward the hurricane of riders went,  
 Across the desert, head by head the horse,  
 A hundred armies failed to stay their course.  
 The tribes of Masdamuda met their wrath,  
 The men of Dhirar bowed along the path;  
 The blood stains shone on every scimitar  
 And in our breast we felt the rage of war;  
 Upon each brow arose the angry flush  
 As swollen rivers thro' the channels rush;  
 Impetuous as a torrent on we pour  
 Thro' lands the Muslim never knew before.  
 Kairwan behind us in the darkness set;  
 Before the skyline and the desert met;  
 Into the waste we rode; the solar rays  
 Are shivered where the serried lances blaze;  
 Cities we passed half-buried on the plain,  
 Whose silent splendour made us tighten rein,  
 And gaze in awe upon the crumbling walls,  
 Deserted courts, forsaken towers and halls  
 Of vanished peoples; empires famed of old;  
 Of haughty Carthage "Sons of thunder," bold;  
 Of Western Rome and her embattled peers;  
 Of Vandal rage and Afric's proudest spears.  
 We heard the fierce Zenete curgling shout.  
 The lance were set and scimitars were out.  
 But who would dare to brook the chieftain's might  
 And still unconquered quit the field of fight;



Alone without a peer in war or state,  
 He stood supreme, amid the greatest great ;  
 In action swift and ready to endure,  
 In counsel wise and aye in judgment sure.  
 Nations and tribes and races strong in war  
 Unto his prowess paid a due devoir ;  
 On many a cruel field they bravely dared  
 To quell his pride, but none with him compared ;  
 Heroes they were who knew when they were beat  
 And came and placed their tribute at his feet ;  
 They offered service of their bows and brands  
 And owned him captain of their martial bands.  
 The foemen fell where'er his bowmen bent,  
 And guarded cities where his spearmen went ;  
 The car of victory galloped with the hours,  
 The breezes blew his flags on Tanja's towers.  
 In many a morning sun's unclouded light  
 We stood arrayed with spears and turbans white,  
 On every cheek the life-blood's tingling flush ;  
 And yet the sunsets saw the lances blush  
 A deeper crimson than the opening rose ;  
 And many a day in joy and sorrow close ;  
 With sorrow for the men who fought and fell,  
 The comrades we had learned to love so well ;  
 With joy because we knew another land  
 Had yielded to our chieftain's matchless brand ;  
 Another tribe subdued by Noseyr's son,  
 A victory added and a kingdom won.  
 For he was first commander, first of men,  
 We ne'er shall see his like in fields again ;  
 No eye so keen the marshalling cohorts scan,  
 No brain so skillful guide the Mussalman.  
 The trump may sound but feebler hearts shall lead,  
 And weaker Emirs check the curving steed ;  
 The sword above all others in renown :  
 The sword that smote the Afric tribesmen down :  
 The blade that set ablaze the northern plain,  
 Subdued the Gothic power and humbled Spain,  
 And laid Don Roderick's chivalry in dust.  
 Is useless now, unused and gathering rust.

He had his faults, the greatest have we own.  
 For even defects besmire the grandest throne ;  
 The flaws of greatness by the least are found,  
 They show like sunspots on the dazzling round,  
 He was a warrior born to be revered,  
 His people loved him and his foemen feared ;  
 Wondrous the dreams his mighty mind conceived ;  
 Results as wondrous genius has achieved.  
 Is it not great in these ambitious days,  
 To conquer nations, gain their love and praise ;  
 Thro' northern, Afric lead the Mussalmans,  
 And bring to Islam all the warring clans,  
 To bind unto his cause their chivalry  
 And bid them bear his banners o'er the sea ;  
 And led by Taric-ibn-Zeyad's lance,  
 To sweep in glory to the hills of France.

## THE KING AND THE SLAVE GIRL.

They stood in fair Cordova palace, the king and the  
 slave girl bright ;  
 He unclasped from his throat a necklace and, its  
 diamonds flashed in the light,  
 As the circlet of beautiful gems, he placed on her  
 shoulders slight.  
 And the lamp light danced and played on the curls  
 of her golden hair,  
 And the rubies rose and fell, and shone on her bosom  
 bare ;  
 While the courtiers looked on in amaze, at a scene  
 that was seen so rare.  
 Abd-er-Rahman turned to the throng, those chiefs  
 of a fearless race,  
 He smiled at the look of surprise that glanced on  
 each emir's face ;  
 He spoke to the poet Abdallah, the first in that  
 gorgeous train,  
 And commanded that he should commen'rate the  
 deed in his sweetest refrain.  
 As the soul of the evening for grandeur, in spirit  
 outrivalling morn,  
 In the rapture and passion of beauty the song of the  
 singer was born :  
 It arose as the flight of the swallow, the moan of the  
 wind o'er the deep ;  
 All motionless, still, were the hearers, as birds poised  
 on wing or asleep.

" Oh bright is the gold that is shining and fair is each  
 glittering pearl,  
 But brighter and fairer art thou than the gold or the  
 gems, sweet girl ;  
 Tho' brought from the depth of the mines, both the  
 jacinth and emerald bright,  
 Their loveliness can't be compared unto thine, nor  
 the moon of the night ;

The stores of the Maker of men have jewels of worth  
 rich and rare ;  
 But neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, with  
 thy beauty compare ;  
 The earth and the sky and the sea, their glories all  
 sink in the shade,  
 Most Wonderful Pearl of Life, that the hand of the  
 Maker has made."

And the lash of the sovereign was wet, and the hand  
 that had conquered his foes,  
 It shook as it ne'er did in battle ; his words his  
 emotion disclose :—  
 "O, Xamri, what beautiful gifts of song Allah be-  
 stowed upon thee,  
 Ev'ry thought, ev'ry line, flowing on, like the swell of  
 the resonant sea ;  
 As the pale, pale shadows of night shun the light at  
 the birth of the day,  
 So the shadows of care shun the birth of the soul of  
 thy tenderest lay ;  
 The ears of thy hearers it charms, the beat of thy  
 dulcet tone  
 Strikes the listener with throb of its passion, lays  
 claim to the heart as its own.  
 The maiden, 'twas Allah, who gave unto her, her  
 beauty and charm,  
 Those eyes so enchanting, that bosom so pure, and  
 being so warm ;  
 More joys than the sweetest of jasmine, the folds of  
 the joshun disclose,  
 The maid that I love, she is fairer, far fairer than  
 bloom of the rose ;  
 If mine eyes they were mine to present, they were hers  
 if she only would ask ;  
 My heart I would give, if I might in the light of her  
 countenance bask."

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## DAYS OF EN-NASIR.

In the time of great en-Nasir, Cordova's enlightened  
 age ;  
 In the palmy days of Islam, chivalry became the rage.  
 And her scions in the tourney sought to win undying  
 fame,  
 From the lowest to the highest, prince and chevalier  
 and page.  
 And the fairest knew the bravest by the colours that  
 he wore  
 And she knew to keep her favour he would desperate  
 battle wage.  
 Not alone in camp or tourney, nor in court or courtly  
 grace  
 Was the reign of Nasir storied by the poet's heritage ;  
 Not alone in feats of knighthood or in deeds of  
 bravery,  
 Nor in jousts for love and honour did the Moorish  
 lord engage ;  
 All around the lakes of learning overran the verdured  
 banks  
 And the land was full of music and the wisdom of the  
 sage ;  
 For the sovereign was a scholar, one of nature's  
 noblest sons,  
 Literature and science flourished underneath his  
 patronage ;  
 Every hill and every palace in beloved Andaloos  
 Was the meeting place of scholars and of birth and  
 lineage.

**ALMANSUR.**

O'er the hills of Andalusia  
     Rings the Arab battle-cry,  
 Fast Islamic spearmen gather,  
     There Omeya's banners fly ;  
 Great Almansur leads to battle  
     Cordova's effulgent shields ;  
 Victor o'er his Christian foemen  
     On a hundred tented fields.  
 Never did a doughtier leader  
     Guard the sacred law Kuran ;  
 O'er the Muslim spears in battle  
     Eagle-eyed the conflict scan ;  
 Where the sunshine it was sparkling  
     On the point of steeled lance ;  
 With the sternest legions pressing  
     'Gainst the knights of Spain and France.  
 Thro' the heart of the Asturias,  
     Thro' the mountains of Navarre,  
 In a hurricane of fury  
     Swept the hero's helms afar ;  
 Shrieked the north in sudden anguish  
     Where the warrior turned his course ;  
 Desolation, desolation,  
     Trodden by the Moorish horse.  
 Fifty-two campaigns the chieftain  
     'Gainst his northern foemen led ;  
 And his spearmen rode to conquest,  
     Trampling every pathway red,  
 In the dust Navarre is lying,  
     Bleeds Castile at every pore ;  
 For Abdallah's mighty scion  
     Islam's colours proudly bore :  
 With the swordsmen of Elvira,  
     Cordova's renowned lance ;  
 Where Toledo's troops are dashing,  
     Saragossa's Emirs prance.

O'er the wreck of wild Comarcas  
Line on line the Muslims sped ;  
Not a foe dare stand for battle,  
Not a Christian raise his head ;  
For the Eastern turbans glittered,  
And the clarion tekbir ran ;  
When the lance of great Almansur  
Led the Moorish battle-van.

FROM  
**MO'TAMID ABEN ABAD**

*King of Seville*

TO

**ALPHONSO**

*King of Leon and Castille.*

A manly heart may not endure  
 To hearken unto words like thine ;  
 Howe'er the ties of friendship pure  
 Thro' past experience may entwine.  
 Vile terror can no refuge find ;  
 Nor the debasement born of fear ;  
 Within the harbour of the mind,  
 Or soul of generous cavalier.  
 O why should I in terror quake  
 Before the threatenings of thy sword,  
 Or as a servile slave to shake  
 Before the anger of his Lord ?  
 Degrading, base is fear, its throne  
 Within the vulgar mind alone.

If in a dark and doleful hour  
 Of my eventful destiny,  
 Pledges of faith and helping power  
 I ever offered unto thee ;  
 Expect nought henceforth at my hand,  
 Nor hope beneath the azure vault,  
 To find one city in the land  
 Free from the combat and assault.  
 Battle by night and day, no break,  
 Destruction that shall never cease ;  
 Thy portion now I bid thee take :  
 Fire and sword but never peace.  
 Such are the gifts I proffer, free,  
 The tribute I will pay to thee.



No gold nor silver trinkets send  
 On other baubles to encroach ;  
 The sheen of swords shall splendour lend,  
 To herald to thee my approach.  
 Greater and mightier far is He—  
 Creator of the world : from dust  
 The man ; Master of all—to be,  
 And is ; Allah in whom I trust.  
 Far greater than the Cross I ween  
 To which your sacred vows are paid  
 In symbol on your banners seen  
 It waves, and gleams on shield and blade  
 Up then ! to battle rush ! Give heed !  
 I call to fight, so arm with speed !

And never from this day, between  
 Us two be aught but strife again,  
 Than slaughter nothing milder seen.  
 Alas, for the terror of Spain !  
 The noonday sun eclipsed shall wade  
 Thro' changing fields of broken cloud  
 As beads of dew in rubies laid  
 The tears of blood his brilliance shroud.  
 The tempered steel our light shall be  
 Forth flashing—'mid the groaning throng—  
 A myriad sparks, a silvered sea  
 As lance and sabre meet in song.  
 See how the falchions are their eyes  
 Bewildering, confusions rise !

Repentance lingers not, with blood  
 The lances of our warriors glow,  
 Dipped in the streams whose issuing flood  
 Pours from thy people lying low.  
 We do not fear to enter 'mid,  
 The files of swords, nor to advance,  
 With neither face nor bosom hid  
 In mail, from the opposing lance ;  
 To us the furious blows that spark  
 Amid a raging host at strife ;  
 Are but the guiding stars that mark,  
 The pathway to eternal life.  
 God favours and upholds the true.

## ALI ATAR

LION OF LOXA.

Killed at Lucena,

21st April 1483.

"The veteran warrior, with nearly a century of years upon his head, had all the fire and animation of a youth, at the prospect of a foray."—*Irving*.

## SCENE.

The Gates of Loxa.

*The Officer of the Guard :*

Ho ! my comrades, cease your jesting ;  
 I have bodings of defeat ;  
 As the king is with the army  
 May they no disaster meet.  
 But I cannot help this feeling  
 That is weighing on my soul ;  
 Till I seem to see the turbans,  
 Cloven heads and helmets roll.  
 I remember listening, brethren ;  
 It was yonder on the green,  
 And the one who told the omen  
 Was a noble Granadine.  
 When they left the town that morning,  
 Left it, too, in pomp and state,  
 Lord Abdallah broke his lance, when  
 Passing thro' Elvira gate :  
 Also as they crossed the rambla  
 In the night by moon and star,  
 Silently along barranco,  
 Over rolling combe and scar ;  
 From his lair a fox was startled ;  
 Sped afar in wild career,  
 Tho' they shot their arrows at him,  
 He escaped the bow and spear.  
 So my heart is heavy, brethren,  
 And my spirits freighted down ;  
 I am woeful for Granada ;  
 Peerless city, queenly town.

See ! a speck against the mountain !  
 Comrades, at once give heed :  
 I will swear it is a horseman  
 Riding here with utmost speed :  
 Nearer, nearer, he approaches :  
 Nearer, nearer, mark him well ;  
 He has been in dreadful battle  
 That his charger's pace may tell ;  
 Watch him now, his plume is drooping  
 I see neither lance nor shield,  
 While his courser's foam-flecked nostrils  
 And his weary haunches yield.  
 By the splendour of the Prophet !  
 Gentlemen, I know that form ;  
 'Tis young Caleb of Granada,  
 Braver never breasted storm ;  
 See, his armour is unbuckled ;  
 Yon's an empty scabbard's swing ;  
 He is bearing doleful tidings  
 Of our army and our king.  
 Down they go the horse and rider !  
 What ! are hands to help them few ?  
 Open wide, I say, the gateway,  
 Bear the wounded warrior thro',

*The warrior enters*

*The Officer of the Guard again :*

Tell us gallant Caleb truly,  
 Say, what tidings do you bring  
 Of the horse and foot that followed  
 Fair Granada's youthful king ?  
 Speak and fear not, no dishonour ;  
 No disgrace, we may be sure,  
 Ever will, nor ever rested  
 On the 'scutcheon of the Moor :  
 If they fell, they fell like heroes ;  
 Who are living ? Who the dead ?  
 Tell us of the spears who followed  
 And the valiant chief who led ;

Tell us of the son of Nasir,  
 Is the Lord Abdallah killed ;  
 And Granada's cup of anguish  
 To the brim with Marah filled ?  
 And the Lion, Ali Atar,  
 What of him, the trusty, tried,  
 Does he still maintain the conflict.  
 Or, has Loxa's chieftain died ?  
 If he lives, the war-worn victor  
 On a hundred fields of fight,  
 There is hope in store for Loxa,  
 Thro' the darkness, streaks of light.

*The women press around him, some asking for sons or brothers,  
 other for a lover's fate.*

*The warrior thus replies :*

Silence soldiers ! silence women !  
 I shall tell to thee a tale  
 That will make the visage ashen  
 And the swarthiest forehead pale ;  
 That will turn the bloom of roses  
 On the maiden's glowing cheek  
 To the whiteness of the snow-drift  
 On Nevada's hooded peak.  
 I have left a furious combat  
 Where the sword and lance were keen  
 I have left a field of battle  
 Such as few have ever seen.  
 You remember how at Loxa  
 We met Ali Atar's spears ;  
 There were o'er a thousand of us,  
 Doughtiest of our chevaliers.  
 Certain omens of disaster  
 Shadowing the march we saw,  
 But the Sultan scorned the portents,  
 Bade us for his honour draw.  
 So we crossed the Christian frontier,  
 Passed by winding stream and rill  
 But at last the warning signals  
 Flashed along from hill to hill.

At Lucena gates we thundered,  
 And Hernandez stood at bay ;  
 All the while relieving columns  
 Pressed to bar our homeward way.  
 Thro' the mist we heard the bugles,  
 Caught the glint of helms and spears,  
 Heard the trampling of their horsemen  
 Clearly sounding on our ears.  
 Right and left, behind, before us,  
 We beheld the lances shine,  
 Foot and horsemen, Caballeros  
 And Hidalgos, line on line ;  
 There the liegemen of Vaena  
 Followed Cabra's Count in pride.  
 There Lucena and Ubeda  
 Rallied by Hernandez's side.  
 There the old Alcayde De Porres  
 Galloped with a numerous train ;  
 Aguilar, redoubted captain  
 Led the chivalry of Spain.  
 And we charged, they charged, the meeting,  
 God ! I seem to see it now,  
 See the levelled lines of lances  
 And each set determined brow ;  
 Hear the crash and see them riven  
 Into pieces by the shock ;  
 Riven as an earthly tremor  
 Rends asunder granite rock.  
 Horse and rider, dead or dying  
 Stricken in the deadly fray ;  
 Breastplates, bucklers, helmets, lances,  
 On the field in fragments lay.  
 Still they came renowned warriors  
 Of Castile and Arragon,  
 Down the hillside, thro' the valley,  
 Companies were spurring on ;  
 Fiercely, in disorder backwards  
 Bore our stoutest cavaliers ;  
 Time on time we broke their rushes  
 With the remnant of our spears.

Where the Mingonzalez river  
 Swollen poured its turbid flood ;  
 Fighting every inch we yielded  
 Faint with wounds and plashed with blood ;  
 Here and there in mortal combat  
 Hand to hand and sword to sword ;  
 Heroes perished all unheeded,  
 Spanish Don and Moorish Lord.  
 Yes ! I saw your brother, maiden,  
 Trampled by the horse's feet :  
 No ! there was not time to save him,  
 There was nothing but retreat.  
 And thy son, old man, I saw him  
 On the Mingonzalez bank  
 When Diego and Lorenzo  
 Swept upon our fainting rank ;  
 By his sovereign's charger pressing  
 With his guards to do or die ;  
 Then I saw his courser, reeking,  
 Riderless, go plunging by.  
 They were noble, young and valiant  
 Who with Lord Abdallah stood ;  
 Fairest flowers of Muslim knighthood  
 And they fought as Muslims should.  
 It is said Abu Abdallah  
 In the struggle was unhelmed,  
 And surrendered to Hernandez  
 When by numbers overwhelmed.  
 Ali Atar, chief of veterans  
 In the fury of his wrath,  
 Thro' the cohorts of Espana  
 Often hewed a dreadful path ;  
 But the legions grew the denser,  
 Every mountain flashed alarms,  
 When we formed at Alaringo  
 All the frontier was in arms.  
 There I saw thy lover fair one  
 He was battling by my side ;  
 When we plunged our panting horses  
 In Xenil's embroiling tide ;

And we charged amid the foemen,  
 Thro' the centre of their force,  
 When I paused and looked behind me  
 I saw neither man nor horse.  
 On the further bank undaunted  
 Ali Atar led the fray,  
 I beheld the aged hero  
 Holding all his foes at bay ;  
 And his hoary hair was streaming  
 From beneath his turban's fold ;  
 And his Moorish falchion sweeping  
 Where the battle's thunder rolled ;  
 While a hundred eager lances  
 Sought his life on every side,  
 And his 'broidered vest was glutted  
 With his life-blood's crimson tide.  
 Yet he shouted to his soldiers,  
 Bade them rally o'er and o'er,  
 Even as he bade their fathers  
 More than sixty years before.  
 Then a score of sabres darted,  
 Sabres madly drink their fill ;  
 God ! I hear the Muslim Lion  
 Thundering forth defiance still.  
 Then the blade of Don Alonzo  
 Rose an instant in the air,  
 And the next, a purple current  
 Mingled with the silver hair.  
 Life and death ! 'twas great to see him  
 As he waved his sword on high,  
 With a last and dying effort  
 Shouting out his battle cry ;  
 Then he passed, beneath the waters  
 Turbid tide no resting place,  
 Swept to God by fire and fury  
 Like the noblest of his race.

## ABDALLAH EZ ZAGAL AT FEZ.

MUHALED ABU ABDALLAH, better known as Ez Zagal (the Vailant) was a famous Moorish warrior, brother to King Abu Hasan of Granada. On the death of that king he was proclaimed Sultan by the party headed by the Beni Zeraj; while his nephew Abu Abdallah-el Zogoybi, el Chico, was proclaimed by another party, headed by the Beni Zegri. He led the Moors at the famous battle in the hills over Malaga, when the flower of the Spanish chivalry fell, but, opposed both by his nephew and the Christians, was unable to make headway, and at last, after a long and stubborn defence, he surrendered to Ferdinand. He was appointed King of Andarraz, but sold his kingdom to the Christian sovereigns and passed into Africa, where he was blinded by the King of Fez, who caused a basin of glowing copper or mercury to be passed before his eyes. He wandered about in abject poverty, begging from door to door, and mocked by the common people, until the King of Velez Gomez took pity on him, and allowed the unhappy warrior to end his days in peace in his dominions. The last fighting king of the Spanish Arabs, had he been supported, he might have preserved the kingdom of Granada, for at least another generation; the following attempts to depict the scene in Fez, where he is being jeered at by the people and is one of the most pathetic incidents in the life of a man who was in his younger days acknowledged by friend and foe to be the noblest chevalier and the finest lance in Europe.

Leave me children, leave me striplings, mock ye  
not the aged now,  
Once I was as proud as any with a helmet on my  
brow.

What? Ye tell me I am boasting, that I never  
drew a blade.  
Never for a lady's favour in the tourney foeman laid.

Have ye heard of Ronda mountains, yonder in the  
Spanish land?  
How the troops of Don Rodrigo fell before the  
Muslim brand?

I was there that day of triumph, in the thickest of  
the fray.  
When Espana's best and bravest on the mountains  
dying lay.

Still ye mock me? See the scars! They are the  
proofs that I advance,  
That in days of youthful ardour I have borne Islamic  
lance;



Where the Prophet's banner flaunted, and the faithful  
rallied round,  
I have stood 'mid dead and dying on the battle  
cumbered ground.

Blind ! They blinded me, my foemen ; Allah grant  
again my sight.  
Eyes and arms as strong as ever, when I led my  
spears in fight.

'Tis the truth, ye knaves, I tell you ; know ye not a  
Moorish Lord ?  
Have your fathers never told you how they feared  
Ez Zagal's sword ?

Hearken to the mob of cowards ; listen to their  
mocking cheers ;  
Dogs who dare not meet my sabre when I led  
Granada's peers.

Allah, but an instant grant me, I may bear the lance  
and glaive ;  
I will prove to them, Abdallah still can head the  
battle wave.

Dotard am I ? I remember in those days of wild  
delight,  
Not a shield in Christian Europe could withstand  
my lance in fight.

Now begone ! Ye worthless rabble ! Will ye mock  
a sightless man ?  
Scorning thus a helpless warrior who has led the  
Muslim van.

Heard ye not how proud Hidalgos when we met in  
friendly hour,  
Doffed their helmets to Ez Zagal as a tribute to his  
power ?

Hear I not the tramp of chargers ? Can I Merwan's  
scions trace ?  
Have the lions of Omeya, left the palace of their  
race ?

It is so ; they died like heroes ; heroes fighting till  
they fell :  
Even yet their memory lingers, of their glory still  
we tell.

What ; Abdallah are you wandering ? Has your fate  
unhinged your mind ?

Why ; O, why, you base protector : did you make  
Ez Zagal blind ?

Oh, my God ; I cannot see thee, but I feel thee,  
trusty blade ;  
Many a score of Christian foemen on the sward you  
stricken laid.

What ; You jeer again, you scoffers, one who bled  
in Islam's cause ?

Have you never read his teachings or practised the  
Prophet's laws ?

Has the chivalry we taught you, been forgotten in  
a day ?

Is Granada's martial glory lost in ruin and decay ?

Had you followed great Ez Zagal we had held  
Alhambra's tower ;

Beaten off the Catholic sovereigns, and restore  
the Muslim power.

I have known the days, ye caitiffs, when I rode on  
battlefields,

With a thousand knights behind me and in front a  
thousand shields ;

I have seen the morning sunshine shining on the  
lines of spears ;

I have seen the evening crimson and a rain of  
women's tears.

Brave Alonzo ; wise Gonzalo ; ye were cast in  
knightly mould ;

Cienfuetos ; Santiago ; faithful friends, and foemen  
bold ;

We have met amid the carnage ; oft in'tourney ring  
we drew ;  
Side by side with Cid Alnayer, and Ben Egas  
staunch and true.

Never more the Bivarambla will resound with Moorish  
song ;  
Never more the Beni Zeraj proudly on the causeway  
throng ;

Never more Alhambra palace with the shout of  
Allah ring ;  
Never more a Beni Nasir gird his sword and ride a  
king.

They have gone, the gallant, noble ; they have furled  
their fighting flags ;  
They have left alone, the eagles on the Alpuxarras  
crags ;

Gone to join their mighty fathers, men whom brave  
Alhamar led ;  
Buried with Granada's glory, numbered with her  
dauntless dead ;

Why am I not there beside them, lying with the  
honoured brave ?  
Royal blood should stream in battle, never creep in  
viens of slave.

Why did I not perish, Hamet, noble Zegri ; on that  
day ;  
When you stood on Gibralfaro like a Muslim lord  
at bay ?

Scorned by slaves, the people jeer me, well they  
know my want of sight ;  
When I rode with thee Ben Egas ; then they feared  
Ez Zagal's might.

O to see again Granada with the Vega stretching far,  
And the Darro flashing onward, fairer than the  
morning star ;

Once again in tourney contest bear on high the  
victor's lance ;  
Or to awful shock of conflict, bid the Moorish lines  
advance ;

Once again to lead, the chevaliers I led in days of old,  
When the cry of Allah Ackbar o'er Nevada's  
summit rolled.

O to see the groves of Loxa, Almeria's bowers of  
love :  
Court of lions ; myrtle gardens, and the snow-crowned  
peaks above ;

Raise aloft the Prophet's banner ! Place it on  
Alhambra tower !  
Up, ye valiant sons of Islam, and defy Ferdinand's  
power !

'Tis too late ! The swords are broken and the  
turbans torn amain,  
And the flowers of Andalusia withered on Espana's  
plain ;

Ali Atar, Abil Gazan, ye were lions in the fight ;  
Aben Hasan, Aben Farhar, stainless chief and  
peerless knight.

Hear the hooting of the scoffers ? Give me but a  
thousand lance !  
I will sweep them as I swept the cavaliers of Spain  
and France.

Blind, O God ! I had forgotten they had burned  
Ez Zagal's eyes,  
One who blanched before his falchion did the  
treacherous deed devise ;

Take me hence, O gracious Allah, from this base,  
deceitful land,  
Great Ez Zagal met his foemen eye to eye and  
brand to brand ;

His the honesty of purpose that true chivalry ensures,  
Even the Spanish Caballeros called him, the "Lion  
of the Moors."

## THE LAST GREAT MOOR.

Ten thousand tents along the valley spread,  
 A thousand Caballeros battle-bred ;  
 The sun shone bright on spear and shield and helm,  
 The noblest swords in fair Espana's realm ;  
 Ferdinand and his queen with all their might,  
 Navarre's proud lord, Castile's most reckless knight.  
 They came from north and south, and east and west  
 Of Christendom, the doughtiest and the best,  
 For their religion's sake the lance to wield ;  
 Against the Moor on Andalusian field :  
 Against Granada town, with arms to strive,  
 The Moorish king of land and crown deprive.

Without the walls in pomp of war unrolled,  
 Of silken tent, steel, mail, and crests of gold ;  
 And, with Ferdinand, Isabella came,  
 And all her court, Castillian maid and dame.  
 The veteran of a hundred fights was there,  
 The youth still ill at ease when swords are bare.  
 The first, to stir anew a failing flame ;  
 The second, win his spurs and make a name.  
 Before their might the Muslim cities fell,  
 Whose ruins yet of former splendour tell.  
 Beneath the bitter sky she stood forlorn,  
 Granada, of her gorgeous trapping shorn ;  
 The beauties of the morning once were hers,  
 The knightliest knights who ere wore gold spurs.  
 An Eastern gem in Western setting placed,  
 Her chevaliers the courts of Europe graced ;  
 From lance and helmet bar the trophies hung,  
 And troubadours of wonderous prowess sung ;  
 First in the tourney ring with sword and spear,  
 No woman's hand might stay their proud career.

Abdallah, in Alhambra palace great,  
 Surrounded by his nobles, sat in state ;  
 Each downcast look told news with danger fraught,  
 Yusuf, Ferdinand's proclamation brought.  
 He read the terms the Christian would accept,  
 Dishonoured, many a famous Emir wept ;

Amid that throng one eye looked on in ire,  
 One chieftain's eye alone flashed battle fire ;  
 The flower of all Granada's youthful might,  
 Muza Ben Abil Gazan, first in fight.  
 He rose, and every eye the light forsook,  
 They feared to meet the general's scornful look.  
 A death-like stillness fell on one and all,  
 An instant's pause in great Alhambra hall.  
 Then, even as the solemn thunder moans  
 Along the sky, came deep his martial tones ;  
 A heart of temper tried by years of strife,  
 To whom a stainless name was more than life.

" These downcast eyes are not for Granadine,  
 A craven he who dreads a foe unseen.  
 Come leave to child and maid those useless tears,  
 Have we not arms, shields, scimitars and spears ?  
 For home and hearth have we not hearts to feel ?  
 And bosoms to withstand the foeman's steel ?  
 Let war, devouring as the simoom's fire  
 Now swallow ranks of men, the son and sire.  
 Arise, ye Muslim lords, 'tis not too late  
 To stem the tide set free again the state ;  
 And let the generations yet to be  
 Tell how we died to set our country free.  
 Death comes to all, nor tells the hour or year ;  
 Azrael's wings o'er shadow each one here,  
 What fear ye then ? Unto the noble heart  
 One refuge still remains, the hero's part,  
 Who for his freedom, children and his wife,  
 And for his native land, gives up his life.  
 The Christian king thinks we the distaff wield,  
 Then let him know we bear the lance and shield ;  
 With every breast for freedom beating warm,  
 In every heart the passion of the storm.  
 Up ! Muslims, up ! arm, arm, each stalwart youth,  
 Two hundred thousand swords to strike for truth ;  
 And prove our father's blood is running yet  
 Thro' every vein, we sons of Arab grit ;  
 The offspring of a sturdy race of old  
 Who cast on high their pennons flaunting fold.

We shall not starve while 'fore us lies a land  
 With milk and honey ready to our hand.  
 Then send us forth against th' apostate brood  
 Our horse are swift and they will find us food ;  
 Or we beneath beloved Granada's wall  
 A soldier's death shall seek, for Islam fall.  
 Behold our women, see ! each pleading maid,  
 Their eyes demand a husband, father's aid ;  
 And shall they plead in vain ? For shame ye men,  
 Gird on your armour, seize your swords again ;  
 Dishonoured will you see them ? captives led,  
 A foeman's thrall for alien board and bed.  
 Your mosques disgraced by unbelieving hands  
 Your shrines profaned by sacrilegious bands '  
 Your faith forbidden ; for each loyal heart  
 The torture chamber ; fire and rack your part.  
 Wake sons of Islam, great Granada's lords ;  
 Wake sons of Islam, grasp again your swords."

The chieftain paused, all motionless as death,  
 So still they sat you scarcely heard a breath ;  
 Contempt dwelt for an instant on his face,  
 He saw the degradation of his race.  
 The anger deepened on his brow's high mound,  
 His flashing eye looked scorn on all around ;  
 Erect the warrior drew his manly form,  
 While on his brow still darker lower'd the storm ;  
 His kindling fury trembled in each nerve,  
 To think his race from battle shock should swerve ;  
 Sons of illustrious birth, in knightly wrath  
 Their fathers swept whole legions from their path :  
 Too feeble now to play a fearless part,  
 Long years of ease had weakened every heart.  
 Again his clarion tones rang clear and strong,  
 Thro' pillared vistas echoed loud and long.

" Men of illustrious blood, Granada's peers,  
 Nasirine princes, Zegri noblest spears ;  
 Abencerrajjes, chieftains good and true,  
 No knightlier swords did foemen's blood inbrue ;  
 More glorious deeds on history's pages trace,  
 Untarnished keep the 'scutcheon of thy race ;

Were it not better should our city fall  
 That we lie buried 'neath her ruined wall ;  
 Than live to brook dishonour and disfame,  
 To hear our sons in scorn pronounce our name.  
 Ye Muslims will ye live to fawn nor fear ?  
 For I shall never craven murmur hear .  
 To find a grave beneath Alhambra towers  
 Were sweeter than a couch within her bowers,  
 To perish fighting in the battle-van  
 The worthy son of worthy Mussalman.  
 Befitting son of sires, who loved in strife,  
 When old, to yield to ruthless brand their life ;  
 Those fearless lions made this land their own,  
 And clad with power the glories of the throne ;  
 A land elate with joy and southern air,  
 And queen of queens and fairest of the fair :  
 They built these towers, proud and magnificent,  
 And chivalry its golden splendour lent ;  
 The groves whose vernal verdure scents the gale,  
 They planted on each plain and happy vale,  
 And shall they pass to Christians ? Can you bear ?  
 For I will not ; by Allah's might I swear."

He ceased ; the echoes fell from sigh to sigh,  
 The nobles moved not ; all afraid to die.  
 Contemptuous thro' the ranks with haughty grace  
 Impatient strode the warrior from the place ;  
 On thro' the lion court he passed, nor deigned  
 To throw a glance. At last his home he gained  
 And bade them bring his horse equipt for fight ;  
 His strongest lance, his falchion, keen and bright,  
 His suit of choicest mail Damascus made,  
 That oft in fight had turned the stoutest blade ;  
 While yet the sombre council sat in state,  
 The bravest Moor dashed thro' Elvira gate.

The sun was setting 'yond Nevada's hills,  
 The wind breathed soft to all the idling rills ;  
 A shady vale amid the mountains lay :  
 Where the Xenil went flashing on its way ;  
 With rugged rock and mighty boulder strewn,  
 While underneath the snowy spray was blown ;



And eddying currents over pools unsounded,  
 Where swirling, hissing waters plunged and bounded.  
 Above, a track, well-worn, on lone hillside,  
 Adown the path a half score warriors ride,  
 As trusty knights as ever couched a lance,  
 'Neath flag of Spain or Oriflamme of France.  
 No danger signals lit the western sky,  
 No portents blazed, nor storm-cloud hovered nigh;  
 No trailing mist, the sun was low and bright,  
 The jewelled spray sparkled with rainbow light;  
 The softest laughter rippled on the breeze,  
 And died in music 'mid the orange trees;  
 The ear by lullaby of songsters charmed,  
 The heart by every tender passion warmed.

But hark! a horse's hoofs now spurn the rocks in  
 wrath;  
 The haughty Dons have lined to bar the path;  
 A single horseman comes, from head to heel  
 Completely sheathed in suit of finest steel.  
 "Hold up, sir knight," the foremost Christians cry,  
 The hills alone return a faint reply;  
 "Hold up Sir knight, Castillian's here, we say."  
 Hark, "Allahu Achbar," the trumpets' bray.  
 The reins fall loose upon the charger's back,  
 The steel-shod hoofs strike fire along the track;  
 The nostrils swell almost to bursting point,  
 The cord-like muscles taut at every joint;  
 The good horse bound with speed that faster grows,  
 Like long-pent storm the Moor is on his foes;  
 Like star from height of outer space he flies,  
 And low as dust a proud Hidalgo lies;  
 Wheeling his barb, bare is his scimitar,  
 Lance rings on shield, swords clash on visor bar;  
 They press around him, nine good men to one,  
 The blades repeat the glory of the sun.  
 "Surrender noble Moor," they cry, in vain,  
 He answers not, but blows the faster rain;  
 Wounded or dead are half his foemen laid,  
 With tireless sweep his good Toledo blade,  
 Unerring finds at every turn a breast,  
 Parries a thrust or cleaves adventurous crest;

His shield is shattered by the shower of blows,  
 Great dints upon his armour gory shows ;  
 His wounded charger sinks and yields its life,  
 He gains his feet, renews again the strife,  
 Still three to one, the strokes with vigor rain,  
 Before the storm his blade is snapped in twain ;  
 He sinks upon his knees before the gale,  
 His life-blood pouring thro' his broken mail.  
 One effort more, from blood he clears his sight,  
 Springs to his feet, unsheaths his dagger bright ;  
 One bound, a glittering streak, descends the knife,  
 Another foeman is bereft of life ;  
 His war-cry woke the hills and quailed the foe,  
 He turned and sprang into the stream below ;  
 The waters close, the white spray wings its flight,  
 Over Ben Abil Gazan, peerless knight ;  
 " Allahu Achbar—God alone is great,"  
 He cried, and lover-like embraced his fate ;  
 His honour, like the sun, for ever sure,  
 He died as Muslim should, the last great Moor.

## BATTLE SONG.

Sons of the east, children of Araby,  
Flashing your spears, tossing your banners gay ;  
On to the war Modhar and Yemen go,  
Swords in the air, laying the foemen low ;  
Swift as a bird, dense as the drifting sand,  
Onward they fly, following band on band.

Men of the North, Cays and Kurayish there,  
Foremost in fight, bred in the desert air ;  
War-cubs at play, cheeks with the battle flush,  
Breasting the plain, on to the prey they rush ;  
Trample and slay, joyful in braving death,  
Knowing no fear, brave to their latest breath.

Far in the fight, leading the raging van,  
Banners of green, outward their sweeping span ;  
Screaming on high over the conflict dread ;  
Vultures aloft, circling far overhead ;  
Steel that was clear shone in the morning bright,  
Swords that were red pale in the evening light.

## THE PASSING OF THE GRANADINE.

What is this ? Where am I ? Comrades, whither,  
 whither, have you fled ?  
 •Blood ! O God and wounded, and my charger here  
 beside me dead.  
 What are these I see ? My comrades ! Yes, I  
 know them by their flags,  
 I have seen them hunt the eagles on the Alpuxaras  
 crags ;  
 Seen them streaming o'er the Vega, guarded by a  
 thousand shields,  
 'Mid the heavy stour and turmoil on a hundred bloody  
 fields.  
 And those others there ? Our foemen ! Many a  
 gentle tilt we've had ;  
 They have perished too like heroes in their battle  
 harness clad.  
 I remember, it was awful ; over yonder on the plain ;  
 For an instant not a movement, then, we gave our  
 horses rein ;  
 Out before us, lance on lance and line on line of  
 glittering blades,  
 'Yond the Guadiswed outspanning, in the far horizon  
 fades.  
 O'er the river, on the foemen, to the onset wild, we  
 rushed  
 And the shining swords and lances, flashed and fell  
 and rose and blushed ;  
 And the tumult gathered round us and the foe in  
 thousands came.  
 Horse and foemen to the onslaught led by chiefs of  
 doughty name,  
 Thicker, thicker grew the cohorts, denser rose the  
 blinding stour ;  
 Men unhorsed, commanders falling, stricken in that  
 dreadful hour.  
 Back they bore us to the river, Allah see them lying  
 there,  
 Braver warriors into action never rode with sabre bare.

Spears who rode with me this morning light of heart  
 and bright of eye ;  
 Strewn around like leaves in autumn, low upon the  
 earth they lie.  
 And I follow ; I am dying ; dying in this lonely place ;  
 Far away from thee Granada ! Glory of my father's  
 race ;  
 Not a comrade to console me grasp in his my nerve-  
 less hand ;  
 Not a son to raise my banner, lift again Abdallah's  
 brand ;  
 Save the dead around me lying ; there my kinsman's  
 turbans shine ;  
 There the children of the Prophet, mighty Lords of  
 Hasan's line.  
 Allah, what a host of memories crowd upon my wan-  
 ing sight,  
 Once again I see the Vega and Xenil's entrancing  
 Loudly now the thundering Dara pours its music in  
 my ears  
 And I hear the tramp of horsemen ; see again the  
 Muslim spears.  
 But I faint, my eyes grow dim and dimmer ; is this  
 death ? Alas !  
 Must the famous race of Nasir into dark oblivion  
 pass ?  
 Yet I perish where my fathers would have gloried in  
 the past ;  
 With their charger, with their soldiers, in the wreck  
 of armies cast.  
 O Granada ! Fairest city ; Andalusia's peerless  
 gem,  
 Pride and glory of my fathers : Islam's western  
 diadem ;  
 Never shall I see thy towers, pace thy marble halls  
 again ;  
 Never down the Bivarambla, lead thy lion-hearted  
 men.  
 They were noble sons you nurtured, gentler never  
 couched a lance ;  
 'Mongst the Spanish Caballeros, or amongst the  
 spears of France :

Brimming with a knightly ardour, stronger than the  
 mountain storm ;  
 From their mother's bosom drawing, passions that  
 were true and warm ;  
 For their honour and their lady with the stoutest  
 lances tilt ;  
 And when graver danger threatened quick to grasp  
 the sabre hilt,  
 Many a foray I have led them far into the Christian  
 lands,  
 And against the greatest captains seen them match  
 their fearless brands.  
 Weakness ! Must I for another perish on the field of  
 fight ?  
 When I dare not for Granada meet the king Ferdin-  
 and's might ?  
 Coward was I, or unlucky ? Was I quite unfit to rule ?  
 Allah in thy mercy pardon I have paid the debt in  
 full.  
 Would that day at Alaringo had proclaimed my funeral  
 knell,  
 When the aged Ali Atar fighting like a lion fell.  
 Where are they the young and gallant with the  
 greenest laurels wreathed ?  
 Better chieftains never falchion in the breast of  
 foeman sheathed.  
 And I lived ; yet saw them falling to maintain  
 Abdallah's cause,  
 For the honour of my kingdom, to uphold the Pre-  
 phets' laws.  
 God forgive me that I wavered when the battle  
 tempest rolled,  
 And I bartered Andalusia for the Catholic sover-  
 eign's gold ;  
 Still, the city must have fallen, nothing could relieve  
 the place,  
 Neither fierce Merini tribesmen, nor, Osmanlis'  
 daring race.  
 Why did I not die that evening when I barred Ez  
 Zagal's way ?  
 When he led relieving columns where Ez Zegri stood  
 at bay,

But a few short years of sorrow and my hours are  
numbered now ;

While I might have passed ; a Hamet, on a Gibralfaro's brow ;

Why did I not follow whither Muza abil Gazan led,  
'Mid the foe to death and honour with my pennon  
overhead.

Now I sink, my breath grows fainter See ! the  
horsemen hurry by ;

All arrayed for tilt and tourney, nodding plume and  
flashing eye.

What a Chevalier is yonder where the doughtiest  
knights are seen,

I will swear 'tis Aben Farhar, fierce of look and proud  
of mien ;

Fast they follow ; Aben Hasan and Ben Egas'  
comely form ;

Kindlier youth in deadly combat never made the  
pulses warm :

Lords of stainless faith and valour who would no  
disgrace endure ;

Islam's crown of martial glory, 'scutcheons that  
enhanced the Moor.

Now I die, forlorn, forsaken, tho' I once a kingdom  
owned,

With a gorgeous staff of courtiers and in regal power  
enthroned.

Fair Alhambra's martial splendour will it never more  
inspire,

Or the breast of Muslim poet with a spark of genius  
fire ?

Is this death at last ? Mohamed is the war-cloud on  
thy brow ?

It is false, they lied who said,—“ Granada's sword is  
broken now.”

Silence, silence, not an answer, it is true that they  
are dead,

And I quickly follow after, Azrael is overhead.

Friends and foemen near me lying, God the scimitars  
were keen ;

They will say Abu Abdallah died a worthy Granadine.

Ayesha,\* mother, in my childhood I had wondrous  
waking dreams,

You with loving thoughts encouraged all my wild  
ambitious schemes.

Failed, I failed for lack of courage, had I, had the  
strength of will

To maintain unequal conflict I had ruled Granada  
• still.

But I go, the dews of death are gathering clammy  
on my brow ;

On the Guadiswed the light of Nasir's House is  
setting now ;

As his ancestors, in battle all Abdallah's troubles  
cease ;

Clement, merciful, receive me, Allah—rest, Muham-  
med—peace.



**GELERA :**

*18th January 1570*

**TO THE MEMORY OF THE HEROIC DEFENDERS.**

Once again the lurid light of burning homesteads  
lit the sky  
Thro' the hills of Andalusia rang the Arab battle cry;  
Armed thousands rushing onward maddened by the  
taste of blood,  
Sweeping every thing before them in an inundating  
flood.

On the heights the men of Islam rallied round the  
ancient flag  
And the Muslim shout of vengeance shook the  
Alpuxaras crag ;

Far below, Granada's Vega, where their sultans ruled  
of old,  
Blood and death and desolation tales of broken  
covenants told ;

Years of tyranny and anguish, persecution and  
neglect,  
Had not curbed the ruling spirit of Arabia's scions  
yet ;

Years of hatred and oppression, nor, the Inquisition's  
fire  
Had not crushed the proud ambition of Omeya's  
martial ire ;

Scornful still, and still as noble as the polished  
chevaliers  
Who upheld the Moorish honour with the great  
Khalifa's spears.

So the sight of mothers ravished, daughters weeping  
in disgrace,  
Stung to fury and unbridled all the ardour of the  
race ;

O'er the crests of the sierras, Argent on an azure  
sky,  
• Flaunting free the spotless banners of the sons of  
Merwan fly :

Pennons that had led victorious and triumphant  
armies forth  
When the lances of Almansur swept the valleys of  
the north :

And the tribes of Ma'd and Yemen spurring onward  
band on band,  
O'er Navarre, Castile, Asturias, waved aloft the  
dripping brand ;

And the helmets sank before them in the bloody  
stour and rain  
And the enemies' bones were whitening on the war-  
swept fields of Spain.

It was useless, yet, they gathered in Gelera's moun-  
tain hold  
To defend the sacred covenant that their fathers  
signed of old ;

All the streets were thronged with people ; warriors  
in armour bright  
Maidens urging on their lovers, wives their husbands  
to the fight ;

Every heart resolved on battle, every soul prepared  
to die,  
With the light of resolution welling from the blazing  
eye.

Strong obstructions lined the rambla, barricades the  
narrow street  
And the walls of houses pierced to facilitate retreat ;

Everywhere determination and the quickening rush of  
breath

Told of anxious thousands waiting, waiting for  
approaching death.

And it came, in lines and billows where beneath the  
lances sheen

And the trampling of the chargers heralded the  
Nazarene ;

At the head in youthful ardour John of Austria rode  
amain,

All the highest Caballeros and Hidalgos in his train:

Who had flocked in crowds to swell the splendour of  
his retinue :

With a prince of royal blood, grandee and magnate  
eager drew;

Drew to try and crush for ever, and to plunder and  
deface

Every vestige, every remnant of the famous Moorish  
race.

On Estremadura roadway dying lay the Musalman,  
Many a scion thro' whose veins the blood of the  
Kurayish ran,

There descendants of Omeya: men of great Al-  
Hamar's line :

Beni Hud and Beni Zegri in unheeded anguish pine,

And beside them sink the women weak and faint for  
want of food ;

Aged mothers ; tender daughters, in the spring of  
maidenhood ;

Youth and age in desolation withered like En-Nasir's  
spears

All to tragic ruin driven on the tempest of the years ;

Not a hand is raised in helping, not an arm is stretch-  
ed to save,

They are chattles made to plunder, heretics condemn-  
ed to slave.

Vengeance ? Vengeance ? Higher , higher ; louder  
 rose the shout of wrath,  
 Ringing over vale and mountain echoing in every  
 path ;

Scimitars were out and flashing, lances singing thro'  
 the air,  
 And the wild Morisco outlaw bounded from his  
 hidden lair ;

Bounded forth in fire and fury to avenge a century's  
 wrongs  
 Side by side the reckless corsair and the ruthless  
 Berber throngs.

But the numbers that they muster are a note to  
 those who ride  
 With the steel-encased Hidalgos by the Austrian  
 prince's side.

Onward came the proud Castellians in magnificent  
 array,  
 Blackened homes and slaughtered peasants marked  
 the fierce oppressor's way.

Now Gelera rose before them founded on a terraced  
 peak  
 Not a soul within its portals either quarter give or seek.

Mines were sprung beneath the ramparts, one  
 beneath the citadel  
 Three assaults were made by stormers and the sabres  
 rose and fell ;

Time on time the most courageous bravely to the  
 breach advance  
 Time on time to break disordered on the line of  
 Moorish lance,

On again they rushed to action more infuriate than  
 before  
 And the very weight of numbers the defenders back-  
 ward bore ;

Still the contest was not over fearlessly the Moor  
engaged,  
Every street a scene of battle, hotter now the combat  
raged.

All day long unceasing action, all day long the surge  
of strife  
Step by step the Muslim yielded, foot on foot and life  
on life ;

Every house became a fortress and a rallying point  
anew,  
Every barricade a centre where the struggle denser  
grew ;

When a wounded son of Islam sank exhausted in the  
fray  
Gentle hands were there to help him and his dying  
pangs allay.

Scimitar in hand the aged fought amid the foremost  
ranks,  
For the chance of dying martyrs rendered unto Allah  
thanks ;

Side by side with father, brother ; mothers, sisters,  
stood at bay,  
Every vantage point contesting, steel in hand the  
Christians' way.

Better far to fall and perish on Espana's ferine sword,  
Than to live and brook dishonour at the hands of  
Catholic lord.

Now retreating, now engaging, eye to eye and brand  
to brand  
Men and women strong for freedom in the cause of  
Islam stand ;

Thicker come the charging squadrons faster they  
defiant fall  
And the martyr's path of glory widens with the  
trumpet call.

Backwards, backwards, slowly, slowly, backwards to  
the citadel,  
Every foot a dreadful carnage, every inch a raging  
hell;

Hours replete with matchless valour, unsurpassed  
heroic deeds ;  
Backwards, backwards till the ramparts all retreat at  
last impedes ;

On the battlements together helmeted and turbaned  
head ;  
Every street is piled with corpses, every house is  
crammed with dead.

Yet the conflict never slackens, wedged together  
youth and maid,  
Shoulder unto shoulder standing, men and women  
blade by blade,

Even children still too feeble to the heavy falchion  
swing,  
Thro' the smoke and din of battle missiles to their  
parents bring.

Numbers tell in such a melee and the end was  
drawing near,  
Smaller grows the Muslim crescent, weaker the  
defending spear ;

O the cruelty and horror and barbarity of the scene,  
One by one they fall undaunted heroine and paladin.

Fathers with a dying effort took the life of child  
and wife  
Then upon the Spanish weapons perished seeking  
life for life ;

O'er four hundred helpless prisoners 'fore th' exultant  
general stood.  
To be butchered in his presence and to die a  
Muslims should ;

Meeting death as calm and careless 'as in Islam's  
prestine years.

Ali, Hamza and Obeida met the brunt of Meccan  
spears,

When the victory of Beder scattered on the winds afar.  
All the broken lance and banners of the house of  
Abd-al-Dar.

Thousands in the morning wakened to the clash of  
ataball.

In the evening thousands lying stark and stiff in  
street and hall;

On the scroll of the immortals the unrivalled action  
trace.

It enhanced the greatest glories of the wondrous  
Moorish race

Write it in enduring letters on a lasting scroll of gold  
How Gelera's men and women dearly life and freedom  
sold :

Ne'er Omeya's fairest banners nor Al Hamar's azure  
bend

Led of old defence so noble or so tragic in its end.

Dead? Not dead? They live for ever while a Muslim  
heart shall beat

And a Muslim voice Gelera's peerless deeds in pride  
repeat.

